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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER II.

CAPTAIN WRAGGE stopped nearly midway in the one little row of houses composing Rosemary-lane, and let himself and his guest in at the door of his lodgings, with his own key. As they entered the passage, a careworn woman, in a widow's cap, made her appearance with a candle. "My niece," said the captain, presenting Magdalen; "my niece on a visit to York. She has kindly consented to occupy your empty bedroom. Consider it let, if you please, to my niece—and be very particular in airing the sheets. Is Mrs. Wragge up-stairs? Very good. You may lend me your candle. My dear girl, Mrs. Wragge's boudoir is on the first floor; Mrs. Wragge is visible. Allow me to show you the way up."

As he ascended the stairs first, the careworn widow whispered piteously to Magdalen: "I hope you'll pay me, miss. Your uncle doesn't."

The captain threw open the door of the front room on the first floor; and disclosed a female figure, arrayed in a gown of tarnished amber-coloured satin, seated solitary on a small chair, with dingy old gloves on its hands, with a tattered old book on its knees, and with one little bedroom candle by its side. The figure terminated at its upper extremity, in a large, smooth, white round face, like a moon—encircled by a cap and green ribbons; and dimly irradiated by eyes of mild and faded blue, which looked straightforward into vacancy, and took not the smallest notice of Magdalen's appearance, on the opening of the door.

"Mrs. Wragge!" cried the captain, shouting at her, as if she was fast asleep. "Mrs. Wragge!"

The lady of the faded blue eyes slowly rose, to an apparently interminable height. When she had at last attained an upright position, she towered to a stature of two or three inches over six feet. Giants of both sexes are, by a wise dispensation of Providence, created for the most part gentle. If Mrs. Wragge and a lamb had been placed side by side—comparison, under those circumstances, would have exposed the lamb as a rank impostor.

"Tea, dear?" inquired Mrs. Wragge; look-

ing submissively down at her husband, whose head when he stood on tiptoe barely reached her shoulder.

"Miss Vanstone, the younger," said the captain, presenting Magdalen. "Our fair relative, whom I have met by a fortunate accident. Our guest for the night. Our guest!" reiterated the captain, shouting once more, as if the tall lady was still fast asleep, in spite of the plain testimony of her own eyes to the contrary.

A smile expressed itself (in faint outline) on the large vacant space of Mrs. Wragge's countenance. "Oh?" she said, interrogatively. "Oh, indeed? Please, miss, will you sit down? I'm sorry—no, I don't mean I'm sorry; I mean I'm glad——" She stopped, and consulted her husband by a helpless look.

"Glad, of course!" shouted the captain.

"Glad, of course," echoed the giantess of the amber satin, more meekly than ever.

"Mrs. Wragge is not deaf," explained the captain. "She's only a little slow. Constitutionally torpid—if I may use the expression. I am merely loud with her (and I beg you will honour me by being loud, too) as a necessary stimulant to her ideas. Shout at her—and her mind comes up to time. Speak to her—and she drifts miles away from you directly. Mrs. Wragge!"

Mrs. Wragge instantly acknowledged the stimulant. "Tea, dear?" she inquired, for the second time.

"Put your cap straight!" shouted her husband. "I beg ten thousand pardons," he resumed, again addressing himself to Magdalen. "The sad truth is, I am a martyr to my own sense of order. All untidiness, all want of system and regularity, causes me the acutest irritation. My attention is distracted, my composure is upset; I can't rest till things are set straight again. Externally speaking, Mrs. Wragge is, to my infinite regret, the crookedest woman I ever met with. More to the right!" shouted the captain, as Mrs. Wragge, like a well-trained child, presented herself with her revised head-dress for her husband's inspection.

Mrs. Wragge immediately pulled the cap to the left. Magdalen rose, and set it right for her. The moon-face of the giantess brightened for the first time. She looked admiringly at Magdalen's cloak and bonnet. "Do you like dress, miss?"

she asked suddenly, in a confidential whisper. "I do."

"Show Miss Vanstone her room," said the captain, looking as if the whole house belonged to him. "The spare room, the landlady's spare room, on the third floor front. Offer Miss Vanstone all articles connected with the toilet of which she may stand in need. She has no luggage with her. Supply the deficiency; and then come back and make tea."

Mrs. Wragge acknowledged the receipt of these lofty directions by a look of placid bewilderment, and led the way out of the room; Magdalen following her, with a candle presented by the attentive captain. As soon as they were alone on the landing outside, Mrs. Wragge raised the tattered old book which she had been reading when Magdalen was first presented to her, and which she had never let out of her hand since; and slowly tapped herself on the forehead with it. "Oh, my poor head," said the tall lady, in meek soliloquy; "it's Buzzing again worse than ever!"

"Buzzing?" repeated Magdalen, in the utmost astonishment.

Mrs. Wragge ascended the stairs, without offering any explanation; stopped at one of the rooms on the second floor; and led the way in.

"This is not the third floor," said Magdalen. "This is not my room surely?"

"Wait a bit," pleaded Mrs. Wragge. "Wait a bit, miss, before we go up any higher. I've got the Buzzing in my head worse than ever. Please wait for me till I'm a little better again."

"Shall I ask for help?" inquired Magdalen. "Shall I call the landlady?"

"Help?" echoed Mrs. Wragge. "Bless you, I don't want help! I'm used to it. I've had the Buzzing in my head, off and on—how many years?" She stopped, reflected, lost herself, and suddenly tried a question in despair. "Have you ever been at Darch's Dining-Rooms in London?" she asked, with an appearance of the deepest interest.

"No," replied Magdalen, wondering at the strange inquiry.

"That's where the Buzzing in my head first begun," said Mrs. Wragge, following the new clue, with the deepest attention and anxiety. "I was employed to wait on the gentlemen at Darch's Dining-Rooms—I was. The gentlemen all came together; the gentlemen were all hungry together; the gentlemen all gave their orders together—" She stopped, and tapped her head again despondently, with the tattered old book.

"And you had to keep all their orders in your memory, separate one from the other?" suggested Magdalen, helping her out. "And the trying to do that, confused you?"

"That's it!" said Mrs. Wragge, becoming violently excited in a moment. "Boiled pork and greens and peas-pudding, for Number One. Stewed beef and carrots and gooseberry tart, for Number Two. Cut of mutton, and quick about

it, well done, and plenty of fat, for Number Three. Codfish and parsnips, two chops to follow, hot-and-hot, or I'll be the death of you, for Number Four. Five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. Carrots and gooseberry tart—peas-pudding and plenty of fat—pork and beef and mutton, and cut 'em all, and quick about it—stout for one, and ale for t'other—and stale bread here, and new bread there—and this gentleman likes cheese, and that gentleman doesn't—Matilda, Tilda, Tilda, Tilda, fifty times over, till I didn't know my own name again—oh lord! oh lord!! oh lord!!! all together, all at the same time, all out of temper, all buzzing in my poor head like forty thousand million bees—don't tell the captain! don't tell the captain!" The unfortunate creature dropped the tattered old book, and beat both hands on her head, with a look of blank terror fixed on the door.

"Hush! hush!" said Magdalen. "The captain hasn't heard you. I know what is the matter with your head now. Let me cool it."

She dipped a towel in water, and pressed it on the hot and helpless head which Mrs. Wragge submitted to her with the docility of a sick child.

"What a pretty hand you've got," said the poor creature, feeling the relief of the coolness, and taking Magdalen's hand admiringly in her own. "How soft and white it is! I try to be a lady; I always keep my gloves on—but I can't get my hands like yours. I'm nicely dressed, though, ain't I? I like dress: it's a comfort to me. I'm always happy when I'm looking at my things. I say—you won't be angry with me?—I should so like to try your bonnet on."

Magdalen humoured her, with the ready compassion of the young. She stood smiling and nodding at herself in the glass, with the bonnet perched on the top of her head. "I had one, as pretty as this, once," she said—"only it was white, not black. I wore it when the captain married me."

"Where did you meet with him?" asked Magdalen, putting the question as a chance means of increasing her scanty stock of information on the subject of Captain Wragge.

"At the Dining-Rooms," said Mrs. Wragge. "He was the hungriest and the loudest to wait upon of the lot of 'em. I made more mistakes with him, than I did with all the rest of them put together. He used to swear—oh, didn't he use to swear! When he left off swearing at me, he married me. There was others wanted me, besides him. Bless you, I had my pick. Why not? When you have a trifle of money left you, that you didn't expect, if that don't make a lady of you, what does? Isn't a lady to have her pick? I had my trifle of money, and I had my pick, and I picked the captain—I did. He was the smartest and the shortest of them all. He took care of me and my money. I'm here, the money's gone. Don't you put that towel down on the table—he won't have that! Don't move his razors—don't please, or I shall forget which

is which. I've got to remember which is which to-morrow morning. Bless you, the captain don't shave himself! He had me taught. I shave him. I do his hair, and cut his nails—he's awfully particular about his nails. So he is about his trousers. And his shoes. And his newspaper in the morning. And his breakfasts, and lunches, and dinners, and teas—" She stopped, struck by a sudden recollection, looked about her, observed the tattered old book on the floor, and clasped her hands in despair. "I've lost the place!" she exclaimed, helplessly. "Oh, mercy, what will become of me! I've lost the place."

"Never mind," said Magdalen; "I'll soon find the place for you again."

She picked up the book, looked into the pages, and found that the object of Mrs. Wragge's anxiety was nothing more important than an old-fashioned Treatise on the Art of Cookery, reduced under the usual heads of Fish, Flesh, and Fowl, and containing the customary series of receipts. Turning over the leaves, Magdalen came to one particular page, thickly studded with little drops of moisture, half dry. "Curious!" she said. "If this was anything but a cookery-book, I should say somebody had been crying over it."

"Somebody?" echoed Mrs. Wragge, with a stare of amazement. "It isn't somebody—it's Me. Thank you kindly, that's the place sure enough. Bless you, I'm used to crying over it! You'd cry too, if you had to get the captain's dinners out of it. As sure as ever I sit down to this book, the Buzzing in my head begins again. Who's to make it out? Sometimes, I think I've got it, and it all goes away from me. Sometimes, I think I haven't got it, and it all comes back in a heap. Look here! Here's what he's ordered for his breakfast to-morrow:—'Omelette with Herbs. Beat up two eggs with a little water or milk, salt, pepper, chives, and parsley. Mince small.'—There! mince small! How am I to mince small, when it's all mixed up and running? 'Put a piece of butter the size of your thumb into the frying-pan.'—Look at my thumb, and look at yours! whose size does she mean? 'Boil, but not brown.'—If it mustn't be brown, what colour must it be? She won't tell me; she expects me to know, and I don't. 'Pour in the omelette.'—There! I can do that. 'Allow it to set, raise it round the edge; when done, turn it over to double it.'—Oh, the numbers of times I turned it over and doubled it in my head, before you came in to-night! 'Keep it soft; put the dish on the frying-pan, and turn it over.' Which am I to turn over—oh mercy, try the cold towel again, and tell me which—the dish or the frying-pan?"

"Put the dish on the frying-pan," said Magdalen; "and then turn the frying-pan over. That is what it means, I think."

"Thank you kindly," said Mrs. Wragge. "I want to get it into my head; please say it again."

Magdalen said it again.

"And then turn the frying-pan over," repeated Mrs. Wragge, with a sudden burst of energy. "I've got it now! Oh, the lots of omelettes all frying together in my head; and all frying wrong. Much obliged, I'm sure. You've put me all right again: I'm only a little tired with talking. And then turn the frying-pan, then turn the frying-pan, then turn the frying-pan over. It sounds like poetry, don't it?"

Her voice sank, and she drowsily closed her eyes. At the same moment, the door of the room below opened, and the captain's mellifluous bass notes floated up stairs, charged with the customary stimulant to his wife's faculties.

"Mrs. Wragge!" cried the captain. "Mrs. Wragge!"

She started to her feet at that terrible summons. "Oh, what did he tell me to do?" she asked distractedly. "Lots of things, and I've forgotten them all!"

"Say you have done them, when he asks you," suggested Magdalen. "They were things for me—things I don't want. I remember all that is necessary. My room is the front room, on the third floor. Go down stairs, and say I am coming directly."

She took up the candle, and pushed Mrs. Wragge out on the landing. "Say I am coming directly," she whispered again—and went upstairs by herself to the third story.

The room was small, close, and very poorly furnished. In former days, Miss Garth would have hesitated to offer such a room to one of the servants, at Combe-Raven. But it was quiet; it gave her a few minutes alone; and it was endurable, even welcome, on that account. She locked herself in; and walked mechanically, with a woman's first impulse in a strange bedroom, to the rickety little table, and the dingy little looking-glass. She waited there for a moment, and then turned away again with weary contempt. "What does it matter how pale I am?" she thought to herself, "Frank can't see me—what does it matter now!"

She laid aside her cloak and bonnet, and sat down to collect herself. But the events of the day had worn her out. The past, when she tried to remember it, only made her heart ache. The future, when she tried to penetrate it, was a black void. She rose again, and stood by the uncurtained window—stood looking out, as if there were some hidden sympathy for her own desolation in the desolate night.

"Norah!" she said to herself, tenderly; "I wonder if Norah is thinking of me? Oh, if I could be as patient as she is! If I could only forget the debt we owe to Michael Vanstone!"

Her face darkened with a vindictive despair, and she paced the little cage of a room backwards and forwards, softly. "No: never till the debt is paid!" Her thoughts veered back again to Frank. "Still at sea, poor fellow; farther and farther away from me; sailing through the

day, sailing through the night. Oh, Frank, love me!"

Her eyes filled with tears. She dashed them away, made for the door, and laughed with a desperate levity, as she unlocked it again.

"Any company is better than my own thoughts," she burst out recklessly, as she left the room. "I'm forgetting my ready-made relations—my half-witted aunt, and my uncle the rogue." She descended the stairs to the landing on the first floor, and paused there in momentary hesitation. "How will it end?" she asked herself. "Where is my blindfold journey taking me to now? Who knows, and who cares?"

She entered the room.

Captain Wragge was presiding at the tea-tray, with the air of a prince in his own banquetting-hall. At one side of the table sat Mrs. Wragge, watching her husband's eye, like an animal waiting to be fed. At the other side was an empty chair, towards which the captain waved his persuasive hand, when Magdalen came in. "How do you like your room?" he inquired; "I trust Mrs. Wragge has made herself useful? You take milk and sugar? Try the local bread, honour the York butter, test the freshness of a new and neighbouring egg. I offer my little all. A pauper's meal, my dear girl—seasoned with a gentleman's welcome."

"Seasoned with salt, pepper, chives, and parsley," murmured Mrs. Wragge, catching instantly at a word in connexion with cookery, and harnessing her head to the omelette for the rest of the evening.

"Sit straight at the table!" shouted the captain. "More to the left, more still—that will do. During your absence up-stairs," he continued, addressing himself to Magdalen, "my mind has not been unemployed. I have been considering your position, with a view exclusively to your own benefit. If you decide on being guided to-morrow by the light of my experience, that light is unreservedly at your service. You may naturally say, 'I know but little of you, captain, and that little is unfavourable.' Granted, on one condition—that you permit me to make myself and my character quite familiar to you, when tea is over. False shame is foreign to my nature. You see my wife, my house, my bread, my butter, and my eggs, all exactly as they are. See me, too, my dear girl, while you are about it."

When tea was over, Mrs. Wragge, at a signal from her husband, retired to a corner of the room, with the eternal cookery-book still in her hand. "Mince small," she whispered confidentially, as she passed Magdalen. "That's a Teazer, isn't it?"

"Down at heel again!" shouted the captain, pointing to his wife's heavy flat feet as they shuffled across the room. "The right shoe. Pull it up at heel, Mrs. Wragge—pull it up at heel! Pray allow me," he continued, offering his arm to Magdalen, and escorting her to a dirty

little horsehair sofa. "You want repose—after your long journey, you really want repose." He drew his chair to the sofa, and surveyed her with a bland look of investigation—as if he had been her medical attendant, with a diagnosis on his mind.

"Very pleasant! very pleasant!" said the captain, when he had seen his guest comfortable on the sofa. "I feel quite in the bosom of my family. Shall we return to our subject—the subject of my rascally self? No! no! No apologies, no protestations, pray. Don't mince the matter on your side—and depend on me not to mince it on mine. Now come to facts; pray come to facts. Who, and what, am I? Carry your mind back to our conversation on the Walls of this interesting city, and let us start once more from your point of view. I am a Rogue; and, in that capacity (as I have already pointed out), the most useful man you could possibly have met with. Now observe! There are many varieties of Rogue; let me tell you my variety to begin with. I am a Swindler."

His entire shamelessness was really superhuman. Not the vestige of a blush varied the sallow monotony of his complexion; the smile wreathed his curly lips, as pleasantly as ever; his parti-coloured eyes twinkled at Magdalen, with the self-enjoying frankness of a naturally harmless man. Had his wife heard him? Magdalen looked over his shoulder to the corner of the room in which she was sitting behind him. No: the self-taught student of cookery was absorbed in her subject. She had advanced her imaginary omelette to the critical stage at which the butter was to be thrown in—that vaguely-measured morsel of butter, the size of your thumb. Mrs. Wragge sat lost in contemplation of one of her own thumbs, and shook her head over it, as if it failed to satisfy her.

"Don't be shocked," proceeded the captain; "don't be astonished. Swindler is nothing but a word of two syllables. S, W, I, N, D—swind; L, E, R—ler: Swindler. Definition: A moral agriculturist; a man who cultivates the field of human sympathy. I am that moral agriculturist, that cultivating man. Narrow-minded mediocrity, envious of my success in my profession, calls me a Swindler. What of that? The same low tone of mind assails men in other professions in a similar manner—calls great writers, scribblers—great generals, butchers—and so on. It entirely depends on the point of view. Adopting your point, I announce myself intelligibly as a Swindler. Now return the obligation, and adopt mine. Hear what I have to say for myself, in the exercise of my profession.—Shall I continue to put it frankly?"

"Yes," said Magdalen; "and I'll tell you frankly afterwards what I think of it."

The captain cleared his throat; mentally assembled his entire army of words—horse, foot, artillery, and reserves; put himself at the head; and dashed into action, to carry the moral entrenchments of Society by a general charge.

"Now, observe," he began. "Here am I, a needy object. Very good. Without complicating the question by asking how I come to be in that condition, I will merely inquire whether it is, or is not, the duty of a Christian community to help the needy. If you say, No, you simply shock me; and there is an end of it. If you say, Yes—then I beg to ask, Why am I to blame for making a Christian community do its duty? You may say, Is a careful man who has saved money, bound to spend it again on a careless stranger who has saved none? Why, of course he is! And on what ground, pray? Good Heavens! on the ground that he has *got* the money, to be sure. All the world over, the man who has *not* got the thing, obtains it, on one pretence or another, of the man who has—and in nine cases out of ten, the pretence is a false one. What! your pockets are full, and my pockets are empty; and you refuse to help me? Sordid wretch! do you think I will allow you to violate the sacred obligations of charity in my person? I won't allow you—I say distinctly, I won't allow you. Those are my principles as a moral agriculturist. Principles which admit of trickery? Certainly. Am I to blame if the field of human sympathy can't be cultivated in any other way? Consult my brother agriculturists in the mere farming line—do they get their crops for the asking? No! they must circumvent arid Nature, exactly as I circumvent sordid Man. They must plough, and sow, and top-dress, and bottom-dress, and deep-drain, and surface-drain, and all the rest of it. Why am I to be checked in the vast occupation of deep-draining mankind? Why am I to be persecuted for habitually exciting the noblest feelings of our common nature? Infamous!—I can characterise it by no other word—infamous! If I hadn't confidence in the future, I should despair of humanity—but I have confidence in the future. Yes! one of these days (when I am dead and gone), as ideas enlarge and enlightenment progresses, the abstract merits of the profession now called swindling, will be recognised. When that day comes, don't drag me out of my grave and give me a public funeral; don't take advantage of my having no voice to raise in my own defence, and insult me by a national statue. No! do me justice on my tombstone; dash me off, in one masterly sentence, on my epitaph. Here lies Wragge, Embalmed in the tardy recognition of his species: he ploughed, sowed, and reaped his fellow-creatures; and enlightened posterity congratulates him on the uniform excellence of his crops."

He stopped; not from want of confidence, not from want of words—purely from want of breath. "I put it frankly, with a dash of humour," he said, pleasantly. "I don't shock you—do I?" Weary and heartsick as she was—suspicious of others, doubtful of herself—the extravagant impudence of Captain Wragge's defence of swindling, touched Magdalen's natural sense of humour, and forced a smile to her lips. "Is the York-

shire crop a particularly rich one, just at present?" she inquired, meeting him, in her neatly feminine way, with his own weapons.

"A hit—a palpable hit," said the captain, jocosely exhibiting the tails of his threadbare shooting-jacket, as a practical commentary on Magdalen's remark. "My dear girl, here or elsewhere, the crop never fails—but one man can't always gather it in. The assistance of intelligent co-operation is, I regret to say, denied me. I have nothing in common with the clumsy rank and file of my profession, who convict themselves before recorders and magistrates, of the worst of all offences—incurable stupidity in the exercise of their own vocation. Such as you see me, I stand entirely alone. After years of successful self-dependence, the penalties of celebrity are beginning to attach to me. On my way from the North, I pause at this interesting city for the third time; I consult my Books for the customary references to past local experience; I find under the heading, 'Personal position in York,' the initials, T. W. K., signifying Too Well Known. I refer to my Index, and turn to the surrounding neighbourhood. The same brief remarks meet my eye. 'Leeds. T. W. K.—Scarborough. T. W. K.—Harrowgate. T. W. K.—and so on. What is the inevitable consequence? I suspend my proceedings; my resources evaporate; and my fair relative finds me at a crisis in my career."

"Your books?" said Magdalen. "What books do you mean?"

"You shall see," replied the captain. "Trust me, or not, as you like—I trust *you* implicitly. You shall see."

With those words he retired into the back room. While he was gone, Magdalen stole another look at Mrs. Wragge. Was she still self-isolated from her husband's deluge of words? Perfectly self-isolated. She had advanced the imaginary omelette to the last stage of culinary progress; and she was now rehearsing the final operation of turning it over—with the palm of her hand to represent the dish, and the cookery-book to impersonate the frying-pan. "I've got it," said Mrs. Wragge, nodding across the room at Magdalen. "First put the frying-pan on the dish, and then tumble both of them over."

Captain Wragge returned, carrying a neat black despatch-box, adorned with a bright brass lock. He produced from the box five or six plump little books, bound in commercial calf and vellum, and each fitted comfortably with its own little lock.

"Mind!" said the moral agriculturist: "I take no credit to myself for this: it is my nature to be orderly, and orderly I am. I must have everything down in black and white, or I should go mad! Here is my commercial library:—Day Book, Ledger, Book of Districts, Book of Letters, Book of Remarks, and so on. Kindly throw your eye over any one of them. I flatter myself there is no such thing as a blot or a careless entry in it from the first page to the last. Look

at this room—is there a chair out of place? Not if I know it! Look at me. Am I dusty? am I dirty? am I half shaved? Am I, in brief, a speckless pauper, or am I not? Mind! I take no credit to myself; the nature of the man, my dear girl—the nature of the man!”

He opened one of the books. Magdalen was no judge of the admirable correctness with which the accounts inside were all kept; but she could estimate the neatness of the handwriting, the regularity in the rows of figures, the mathematical exactness of the ruled lines in red and black ink, the cleanly absence of blots, stains, or erasures. Although Captain Wragge's inborn sense of order was, in him—as it is in others—a sense too inveterately mechanical to exercise any elevated moral influence over his actions, it had produced its legitimate effect on his habits, and had reduced his rogueries as strictly to method and system as if they had been the commercial transactions of an honest man.

“In appearance, my system looks complicated?” pursued the captain. “In reality, it is simplicity itself. I merely avoid the errors of inferior practitioners. That is to say, I never plead for myself; and I never apply to rich people—both fatal mistakes which the inferior practitioner perpetually commits. People with small means sometimes have generous impulses in connexion with money—rich people, *never*. My lord, with forty thousand a year; Sir John, with property in half a dozen counties—those are the men who never forgive the genteel beggar for swindling them out of a sovereign; those are the men who send for the mendicity officers; those are the men who take care of their money. Who are the people who lose shillings and sixpences, by sheer thoughtlessness? Servants and small clerks, to whom shillings and sixpences are of consequence. Did you ever hear of Rothschild or Baring dropping a fourpenny-piece down a gutter-hole. Fourpence in Rothschild's pocket is safer than fourpence in the pocket of that woman who is crying stale shrimps in Skeldergate at this moment. Fortified by these sound principles, enlightened by the stores of written information in my commercial library, I have ranged through the population for years past, and have raised my charitable crops with the most cheering success. Here, in book Number One are all my Districts mapped out, with the prevalent public feeling to appeal to in each:—Military District, Clerical District, Agricultural District; Etcetera, Etcetera. Here, in Number Two, are my cases that I plead:—Family of an officer who fell at Waterloo; Wife of a poor curate stricken down by nervous debility; Widow of a grazier in difficulties gored to death by a mad bull; Etcetera, Etcetera. Here, in Number Three, are the people who have heard of the officer's family, the curate's wife, the grazier's widow, and the people who haven't; the people who have said Yes, and the people who have said No; the people to try again, the people who want a fresh case to stir them up, the people who

are doubtful, the people to beware of; Etcetera, Etcetera. Here, in Number Four, are my Adopted Handwritings of public characters; my testimonials to my own worth and integrity; my Heartrending Statements of the officer's family, the curate's wife, and the grazier's widow, stained with tears, blotted with emotion; Etcetera, Etcetera. Here, in Numbers Five and Six, are my own personal subscriptions to local charities, actually paid in remunerative neighbourhoods, on the principle of throwing a sprat to catch a herring; also, my diary of each day's proceedings, my personal reflections and remarks, my statement of existing difficulties (such as the difficulty of finding myself T. W. K., in this interesting city); my out-goings and in-comings; wind and weather; politics and public events; fluctuations in my own health; fluctuations in Mrs. Wragge's head; fluctuations in our means and meals, our payments, prospects, and principles; Etcetera, Etcetera. So, my dear girl, the Swindler's Mill goes. So you see me, exactly as I am. You knew, before I met you, that I lived on my wits. Well! have I, or have I not, shown you that I have wits to live on?”

“I have no doubt you have done yourself full justice,” said Magdalen, quietly.

“I am not at all exhausted,” continued the captain. “I can go on, if necessary, for the rest of the evening.—However, if I have done myself full justice, perhaps I may leave the remaining points in my character to develop themselves at future opportunities. For the present, I withdraw myself from notice. Exit Wragge. And now to business! Permit me to inquire what effect I have produced on your own mind? Do you still believe that the Rogue who has trusted you with all his secrets, is a Rogue who is bent on taking a mean advantage of a fair relative?”

“I will wait a little,” Magdalen rejoined, “before I answer that question. When I came down to tea, you told me you had been employing your mind for my benefit. May I ask how?”

“By all means,” said Captain Wragge. “You shall have the net result of the whole mental process. Said process ranges over the present and future proceedings of your disconsolate friends, and of the lawyers who are helping them to find you. Their present proceedings are, in all probability, assuming the following form:—The lawyer's clerk has given you up at Mr. Huxtable's, and has also, by this time, given you up after careful inquiry at all the hotels. His last chance is, that you may send for your box to the cloak-room—you don't send for it—and there the clerk is to-night (thanks to Captain Wragge and Rosemary-lane) at the end of his resources. He will forthwith communicate that fact to his employers in London; and those employers (don't be alarmed!) will apply for help to the detective police. Allowing for inevitable delays, a professional spy, with all his wits about him, and with those handbills to help him privately in identifying you, will be here, certainly not

later than the day after to-morrow—possibly earlier. If you remain in York, if you attempt to communicate with Mr. Huxtable, that spy will find you out. If, on the other hand, you leave the city before he comes (taking your departure by other means than the railway, of course), you put him in the same predicament as the clerk—you defy him to find a fresh trace of you. There is my brief abstract of your present position. What do you think of it?"

"I think it has one defect," said Magdalen. "It ends in nothing."

"Pardon me," retorted the captain. "It ends in an arrangement for your safe departure, and in a plan for the entire gratification of your wishes in the direction of the stage. Both drawn from the resources of my own experience; and both waiting a word from you, to be poured forth immediately, in the fullest detail."

"I think I know what that word is," replied Magdalen, looking at him attentively.

"Charmed to hear it, I am sure. You have only to say, 'Captain Wragge, take charge of me'—and my plans are yours from that moment."

"I will take to-night to consider your proposal," she said, after an instant's reflection. "You shall have my answer to-morrow morning."

Captain Wragge looked a little disappointed. He had not expected the reservation on his side to be met so composedly by a reservation on hers.

"Why not decide at once?" he remonstrated, in his most persuasive tones. "You have only to consider—"

"I have more to consider than you think for," she answered. "I have another object in view, besides the object you know of."

"May I ask—?"

"Excuse me, Captain Wragge—you may not ask. Allow me to thank you for your hospitality, and to wish you good night. I am worn out. I want rest."

Once more, the captain wisely adapted himself to her humour, with the ready self-control of an experienced man.

"Worn-out, of course!" he said, sympathetically. "Unpardonable on my part not to have thought of it before. We will resume our conversation to-morrow. Permit me to give you a candle. Mrs. Wragge!"

Prostrated by mental exertion, Mrs. Wragge was pursuing the course of the omelette in dreams. Her head was twisted one way, and her body the other. She snored meekly. At intervals, one of her hands raised itself in the air, shook an imaginary frying-pan, and dropped again with a faint thump on the cookery-book in her lap. At the sound of her husband's voice, she started to her feet; and confronted him with her mind fast asleep, and her eyes wide open.

"Assist Miss Vanstone," said the captain. "And the next time you forget yourself in your chair, fall asleep straight—don't annoy me by falling asleep crooked."

Mrs. Wragge opened her eyes a little wider, and looked at Magdalen, in helpless amazement.

"Is the captain breakfasting by candlelight?" she inquired, meekly. "And haven't I done the omelette?"

Before her husband's corrective voice could apply a fresh stimulant, Magdalen took her compassionately by the arm, and led her out of the room.

"Another object besides the object I know of?" repeated Captain Wragge, when he was left by himself. "Is there a gentleman in the back-ground, after all? Is there mischief brewing in the dark, that I don't bargain for?"

RUSSIAN TRAVEL.

A PRIEST PLAYING HIS CARDS.

ON leaving the church* I happened to fall in beside Sanderson, and as we proceeded to the count's residence I asked him what he knew of the morals of these Russians priests. "Is card-playing a very common thing with them?"

"Common! Why all Russia is ready to play cards morning, noon, and night. Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle, and deal. The emperor's whole court plays; the aristocracy play to a man; the ladies, of all grades, fill up their time at cards—Fool, Your-own-Trump, Three-Leaves, Kings, Wind-mill, and a hundred other games. The shopkeepers sit playing cards for hours at their shop-doors. The bargeman in his boat, the peasant in his hut, children, young men, girls, all play cards. Many an estate changes hands in an evening. I have known three hundred men, women, and children, and a large property, staked on a single game. But these long-haired, long-bearded, broadbrims of lazy priests are, of all such gamblers, the most incessant. I will tell you an instance of my own knowledge."

And this is what Sanderson told:

You saw that fat, tall priest, with the large brown beard, who sprinkled the holy water on the bairns. Weel, he is the head pope of this church, and lives beside it; in fact, there is a covered passage leading from the church to his house direct. One evening before a saint's day I was on a visit to Mr. Pins, who lives in that wooden house beside yon cotton-mill in the hollow, and we were enjoying ourselves as we best could, when a message came from the priest to ask us all to supper. He had a few friends with him, and would be glad to see us. As nothing of this kind is to be refused we went—I, and Pins, and his wife and daughter. The priest's friends were two beards like himself who were to assist next day in church; his wife, also, of course, was there. Supper over, cards were introduced, and down sat Pins and the three holy men to the game, while I was left to entertain the leddies as well as I could. The four gamblers gradually forgot everything else in the room, the head priest being the most intent of the four. The game went on. Now Pins swept the table of roubles, and anon one or

* See A LOOK ROUND THE CHURCH, in No. 156.

other of the priests—the head man evidently losing fast, and Pins winning.

Temper got lost, and scarcely civil words were exchanged amongst the party. I could see Pins's red face, glowing like a nor'-west moon, under the flush of excitement and brandy. As we had supped late, Sunday morning was on us before I was aware. Two o'clock struck, and Mrs. Pins and I jumped to our feet. Two o'clock on a Sunday morning, in a minister's house, playing cards, the gamblers, priests of the Holy Greek Church! It was against the conscience of a Scot to assist at such on-goings, not that I am strait-laced to an hour or two, considering the difference of clocks. I therefore energetically backed Mrs. Pins, who was requesting her husband to go home. Pins rose; but reluctantly, as it seemed to me, and was about to accompany us. The priests had no mind to let him go off so easily. He and his partner had won two hundred roubles, and it was clearly against all rules to run away so soon. The others must have their revenge—it was only two o'clock. So he sat down again, saying, "Go, my dear, with Mr. Sanderson. I'll play the old fellows till daylight, if they like. It shall never be said that an Englishman shirked off because his pocket was full of other people's money."

As our host politely showed us to the door, he said to me, "Do you attend the church at eight?"

"Yes, it is my intention; but I don't think you will be there in a fit state, if you play much longer. It is a shame."

"No fear," he said; "but your friend has won much money, and I must have my turn. It is nothing."

At seven o'clock I was awake by a servant with information that his master had not returned, and that madame desired me to walk to the priest's house, and see how matters stood. I dressed hastily, and went to the parsonage, rectory, or what shall I call it? As I passed the church I saw that it was in course of preparation for the morning performances; but my business was not with the church, it was with the priests. Just as I reached the door a clerk (decchock) was entering. He was a dirty, yellow, sickly fellow, with a flavouring of stale tobacco.

"Where is the pope, Vassillia?" I said.

"Yonder," pointing to the room I had so lately left.

"Playing still? It is too bad."

"To be sure; it is nothing. I have known master play two days and nights at a stretch. But it is now time for service, and I must tell him."

I pushed past him into the room. It was Sabbath morn, half an hour before service, and the men who were to officiate sat round a table with flushed faces, eager looks, dishevelled hair, and ruffled attire. Candles were burnt down in their sockets, daylight streamed in through the shutterless windows. The brandy and wine bottles were empty. A great jug of "ghuass" was on a side-table, old cards littered the painted floor, and the atmosphere was reeking with the

fumes of the "papeross;" for smoking was still going on. I saw at a glance that the tide of luck had left the Englishman. The priest was buoyant; he was flat.

"They are winning it back," he said to me as I entered; "I have had three hundred, now have but fifty."

"Ay," said the tall priest, "and this game will get that back also; it is for fifty—is it not?"

Then the clerk entered, and advanced with as little show of concern as if the exhibition was a fit and usual preparation to the church rites, and after reverentially crossing himself, intimated to the priest in chief that, in half an hour, it would be his time to go on to commence the services.

"Very good, Vassillia, my son. Don't disturb me now, but listen;—come back exactly three minutes before eight."

"I hear, and obey," said Vassillia, and vanished.

I cannot say these men were drunk; on the contrary, they seemed more sober than they had been when I left them at two o'clock; but the demon of play held them in his grip; they were as fresh for it, and as absorbed as if they had only played two or three hours. My remonstrances and expostulations were thrown away, and in indignant curiosity, I sat down to watch the end.

The priest and his partner lost. Pins and his partner won another fifty. The next game was to be double or quits, the deal made with a fresh pack; and, as I sat in full view of the tall priest, I could see his face brighten up, and a look of intelligence pass between him and his partner. At this moment the decchock again entered. "Three minutes to eight o'clock."

All but the tall priest threw their cards on the table and rose, saying "A fresh deal after service."

"No, no," he said, "keep your hand, partner; I shall keep mine, it is a good one, and we shall play the game after our return; here Vassillia, give me a towel, wet: that will do. Now my robes—there—that comb, and now go every one to your posts. I shall be there presently." Thus saying he proceeded with a firm step to the church by the private entrance already mentioned. As he left the room I saw him place his good hand of cards within his sacred robes, under the inside fastening. He was evidently determined not to lose sight of his trumps, and carried them off on his person into the church. I ran round to the front entrance, and was just in time to witness the commencement of the service. It is a wonder judgment did not fall on the chief priest. And it did in a way. At one part of the service, just as he was stepping on the platform, he put his hand inside his robe to pull out his handkerchief, and, as he drew it out, the cards came also unbidden, and fell scattered over the altar floor. This would have paralysed any ordinary man; but that priest never winced for a moment. He looked coolly at the cards, then steadily at the people, as much as to say, "You all see that; take notice of it. I shall tell you about that by-and-by." He then continued

the services. At the close, he pointed to the cards—then beckoned a little peasant boy, with a shock head of white flaxen hair, dressed in a shirt of coarse linen and trousers to match, not very clean, who had been crossing and bending beside a poor peasant woman, his mother:

"Come here, boy!" The boy went. Turning to the congregation, he said: "I shall give you a lesson you will not forget for some time. You see these cards lying on the floor. Do you think I put them there for nothing? We shall see! What is your name, my boy?"

"Peter Petrovitch."

"Well, Peter Petrovitch, go and pick up one of those cards you see on the floor, and bring it to me. There, that will do. Now tell me, Peter Petrovitch, what card is this?"

"The ace of spades!" said the boy, with ready knowledge.

"Very good, Peter Petrovitch—bring me another, that's a good boy. What card is that?"

"The queen of spades," said Peter.

"How well you know them, Peter Petrovitch; bring another. And what may that one be?"

"The ten of hearts."

"That will do, Peter, the son of Peter. Now turn round and look at this picture. Can you tell me what saint it represents?"

The boy scratched his head, then shrugged his little shoulders, lifting them up to his ears, then scratched his head again, and said: "Ya naes nigh." (I don't know.)

"Now look at this one. Who is this?"

The lone answer.

"And this?"

"I cannot tell."

"That will do, Peter, the son of Peter. You may go to your mother."

Turning to the people, he continued:

"Do you know now for what purpose I put these cards on the floor? Do you not think shame of yourselves, tell me—say, is it not disgraceful and scandalous, that that nice white-haired boy can tell me in a moment the name of every card in the pack, and yet he does not know the name of one of the blessed saints? Oh, shame, shame on ye, so to bring up the young, after all the good teaching I have given ye! Go away and learn the lesson I have given you this blessed day. Don't forget it, and don't force me to bring cards into this holy place again. Vassillia, pick the other cards up, and keep them for me."

So with solemn step he left the church to play out his interrupted game for a hundred roubles.

I have given this sketch of a Russian card-playing priest, simply as I got it, and nearly in the narrator's own words, omitting Scotticisms, but retaining the train of thought. Of its literal truth my own experience of the priests, and my later knowledge of the friend whom I call Sanderson, as well as Mr. Pins, entirely assures me.

A WARM RECEPTION.

Count Pomerin's residence was on a slight rise, sloping down among gardens and trees to

the valley. We entered his grounds by a large wooden gateway, and passing through a short avenue of trees over a broad well-kept gravelled path, bordered with flowers and shrubs, a turn to the left with a short curve brought us in sight of the count's birthplace and principal country seat. It was a very long and large wooden building; but I afterwards found it to be only of wood. It seemed to be of brick and plastered. Three parts of it were of one story, but very high, and the other part, which formed the servants' establishment, of two stories. The principal end had large broad windows looking out on a flat lawn, intersected here and there with gravelled walks, and I could see gymnastic poles, swinging trees, &c., at the farther corner. In the middle of the lawn (which might cover three acres), and all about it, in confused disorder, were a great many temporary structures, for what purpose I was soon to learn.

The large windows were all brilliantly lighted up, as if for an illumination. About twenty serfs with blazing pine torches met us as we turned the corner, and preceded us to the main entrance. This was surrounded by men and women of various degrees, all in the holiday costume of the country, who raised a sort of uncouth cheer as we advanced. Across the threshold of the door there lay stretched out the grisly carcases of the two old bears. Around these very material mementoes of the Englishman's skill in rifle-practice, the twenty pine-torch bearers assembled, flaring and waving their torches.

The vestibule, or hall, or lobby, was one blaze of light. In the centre was a table on which was erected a very handsome oberis, image, or joss; in front, on the table, lay a large silver salver containing pieces of black bread, and stands of the same material for salt. A lady stood on each side of the table, one old, the other much younger; these were the mother and grandmother of the count, countesses both. As he leapt from his horse and jumped into the hall over the bears the younger lady ran into his arms and embraced him. All this—with the twenty or thirty horsemen dismounting, grooms in red shirts and wide black velvet trousers stuck into their boots and falling in folds over the sides, and a crowd of stolid staring peasants in the background—gave the scene a lively and uncommon character.

"What does it mean?" I said to the talkative Scotchman.

"That's mair than I know," said he, "but I suspect it is some kindly nonsense of my lady countess, some old custom."

As he spoke, the count, who had been talking to his mother, came out and said to us:

"It seems we are to have a little mummery. My lady mother kindly insists on receiving my guests, and more particularly the Englishman who saved her wild boy's life, in a true old Russian style. The ceremony is simple, over in a moment, but let me tell you for your comfort that after it has been gone through, feudal fashion, my guests are peculiarly sacred in my

house and on my property, and are to be defended from injury with all the means I possess. Now therefore, my friend, advance, and as you cross this bear trample him under your feet."

Harry stepped forward, swinging his great arms about as if he did not know where to put them, crossed the barrier, was received at the table by the two ladies, and warmly greeted by the countess in good English as the preserver of her son; the black bread and salt (previously blessed by the priest) were offered to him, and then he was hurried off to the bath by two attendants in red shirts. Sanderson followed as the second bear-killer, and went through the same process, with the exception of the bath. It was my turn next, and, as I accepted the bread and salt, the countess said, with a sweet smile, "You are very welcome; I cannot tell you how much. Your family is all gone to rest till morning. There, Constantine, show the baron the bath."

THE RUSSIAN BATH.

I was conducted to the rear of the building, and introduced into a very comfortable room, where two strong fellows were waiting to commence operations upon my poor wearied body. This outer room was very well furnished. It might measure about five yards by eight. The floor was covered with some kind of soft matting, on which a clean canvas cloth was spread. There were two excellent large luxurious sofas, a wardrobe, tables, chairs, looking-glass, towels, and all the necessaries for the toilet. I perceived also a suit of my own clothes spread out on one of the tables. I threw myself on a sofa, exhausted, and from that moment became a passive lump of human material in the hands of my two attendants. My fur boots were dragged off and tossed into the wardrobe; fur coat and under-clothes shared the same fate. As each article was removed I felt relief inexpressible. These garments had not left my body for nine days and nights, and, as the last was taken from me, my sense of enjoyment reached its climax. But the relief was too much. I felt a total prostration of body. The energies so long kept on the stretch, the nerves so long braced to the perils of the journey, gave way, and I swooned for the first and only time in my life.

I think I may be forgiven this weakness when it is remembered through what roads we had come, the fatigue being enhanced in my case a hundredfold by the care and responsibility attaching to the party of women and children accompanying me, and more especially by the fact that being chancellor of the exchequer, and having to pay the year's money at every station, besides other small matters, I had not enjoyed two hours' consecutive sleep for nine days and nights. This is the paymaster's grief on a long Russian journey.

But I am lying naked and insensible in the outer room of a Russian bath. The two moosheeks had emptied a bottle of eau-de-Cologne from my lady's repository over my head

and face, and were applying a brandy stimulant when I recovered.

"You are tired, baron. But we will soon mend you. Don't stir." Without more ado they lifted me up like an infant, and carried me into the inner room, where the atmosphere was considerably warmer. Into a bath lined with lead, and nearly filled with water, I was then plunged without ceremony. At first the water felt so hot that I thought I must be scalded, but after a time it became so delicious that I felt willing to remain, so bathed, for ever. But my present possessors were of another mind. I was lifted out and placed on a bench like a flat trough beside the bath. There I was rolled and turned, and firmly rubbed all over with handfuls of mat fibres and soap dipped every second or two into the hot water. I was scrubbed remorselessly by my determined nurses; I might kick and struggle, but it was all one. They grinned, held me down, and scrubbed on for a mortal quarter of an hour. I thought the skin would be peeled off my body, and felt sharp prickly shooting needle-point pains at every pore. Then I was plunged into the bath again in hotter water, and forcibly held there for five minutes. I was in hope this might end the process, and signified a determination to get back to the outer room—but no.

"We have received orders to make you clean and well. Heaven help us, how angry you are! Our orders must be obeyed. You must now go into the 'stove-room.'" It was of no use to resist. I resigned myself to my fate, was lifted out of the bath and carried into the vapour den, the essential part of a Russian bath.

What I had gone through had been only preparatory. This place might be twelve feet high, lined with closely-fitting boards on the roof and all round, so that no steam might escape. In the centre of the floor there rose broad steps of wood, commencing from two sides, and terminating in a large flat board on the top. This board crowning the edifice was about two feet below the roof. The steam or vapour was raised in this manner: A large stove of brick, like a baker's oven, stood in a corner and nearly filled one-fourth of the apartment. It had been heated almost red-hot, the red charred embers of the burnt wood remaining in it. One of the men seized an iron ladle and with it cast water into the fiery gulf. The steam or vapour thus generated rushed out, rising to the roof for vent, and finding none it filled the place. I was laid at first on the bottom step of the centre erection as being the coolest, the vapour increasing in density and power the higher it rose. Even here I felt nearly suffocated with the steam. The rubbing recommenced with fresh vigour, and now buckets of cold water were poured over me, each bucketful having the effect of a shock from a powerful galvanic battery.

Step by step was I lifted up, while the rubbing and dashing of cold water went on alternately, and additional water was thrown into the oven, increasing the density of the steam at

every application. At last they got me on the flat step at the very top, with my nose nearly touching the roof. There I lay in a dense body of hot vapour, hot enough to scald me had my body not been previously tempered for it. I did not know when it was all to end.

I had observed on my admission to this den of steam, several instruments of torture, of the use of which I had a vague presentiment. There were bundles of birch twigs about half or three-quarters of a yard long, the leaves still remaining on one end, but bare where they were tied together, and about two inches in diameter. My tormentors armed themselves with these weapons, and made an onslaught in no tender manner upon my defenceless body, flagellating me back, front, and on both sides, turning me round and round, to get at every corner. More steam was raised during the process, until I felt as if I were in a steam-boiler without a safety-valve, with a pressure of a hundred pounds to the square inch, and ready to be blown out through the roof at any moment. Still every few minutes a pail of cold water streamed hissing from my poor scalded flesh. My man with the mighty arms was, I understood, undergoing the same process in another place. There was no help for me but in myself. All my lost energies had returned in fresh vigour; I felt ready to grapple with a bear, and was by this time as elastic and buoyant as I had before been nerveless. Watching an opportunity, as one of my executioners was fetching a fresh pail of cold water as a prelude to another flagellation, I discharged my foot at his stomach. He rolled down the steps, taking the legs from the other, and they both lay sprawling together on the floor. This was my time. Rolling myself carefully but speedily down the steps, I jumped to my feet, and rushed into the middle room. The men followed me, laughing.

"Ah! Heaven be thanked. Your honour is strong now."

"And clean," I said.

"Yes; clean as new milk."

At any rate, I was as red as a boiled lobster. I felt capable of beginning my whole journey over again. A short time spent in drying with towels, cooling, and dressing, in the outer room, completed the performance. It had lasted one hour, and I left the bath strong, fresh, and vigorous, with a delightfully happy and soothing sensation creeping over me, as the blood danced and coursed with a pleasurable swiftness through my veins.

The Russian bath is a great fact. The whole people, rich and poor, are continually undergoing a process more or less similar to what I have described. The Russian people are said to be dirty and filthy, yet the bath is religiously attended to. This is one of the great Russian questions: How can people who plunge and steam themselves in the bath, as they do, be dirty? But "give a dog a bad name," &c. If the Russians are so dirty as some books tell us they are, it must be that their bodies contain clay in the raw; so, the more they rub the dirtier

they are. But the truth is that the higher ranks are scrupulously clean in clothes and person, and the persons of the lower classes are cleaner than those of the inhabitants of some favoured lands, where baths are almost unknown. Yet the Russian has too much of a good thing, or rather spoils a good thing by his own way of using it.

The constant broiling, steaming, and flagellating gives a pale sickly yellow hue to the complexion of the young, and ultimately enfeebles the whole constitution. On the other hand, considering the description of food used by the great bulk of the Russian poor, but for these baths the stench from their bodies would be as unbearable as that from the African negro. As it is, it is anything but pleasant (especially in fasting-time). But for these baths, one could not with a settled stomach sit behind a drosky-driver. The great mass of the Russian poor never touch soap nor water except at the bath. Workmen, artisans, peasants, shopkeepers, and even merchants, with their wives and families, use very little intermediate cleansing. They eat, work, and sleep, without washing hands or face until the regular bath time. But, at this time, you may see an entire population on the move, going to bath with small bundles of clean clothes, soap, towel, and birch-broom. Large public and smaller private baths are in the cities and towns. Every village—even the smallest hamlet—has its bath for the people. The great mass in towns are accommodated in monster establishments erected by private individuals. They have steam-engines for pumping water, and a host of attendants. One large part is devoted to the poor, and is separated for the sexes. This part can accommodate three hundred or four hundred at once in each establishment, and the charge is a penny for each person. Other parts are suitable for select parties; and luxurious family or private rooms can be had at proportionate prices, from eighteenpence to six shillings. From these baths, where they are born, thousands of illegitimate children are transferred to the foundling hospitals. Other infants are taken there by their mothers as soon as possible after birth. On the evening before marriage the bride is taken to the bath by a band of her maiden companions, each armed with such a birch as I have described, and there she is forced to certain confessions under a torrent of light blows. After a death, all the remaining household must go to the bath. After and before taking a journey, the bath. Before every holiday festival and Sunday, the bath. For rheumatisms, fevers, colds, and diseases of all kinds, the bath. Take from a Russian his children, his wife, anything, but leave him his bath, and there is consolation. If Emperor Alexander were to publish a ukase to shut up the baths he would fall in a month. Paul's crusade against beards was bad enough, but a bath abolition bill would smash the empire.

THE HORSE THAT CAME IN WITH THE DESSERT.

After my bath I found a party assembled in

the grand dining saloon waiting dinner for me. The guests consisted of six Russian gentlemen who had been in the hunt; the card-playing priest and a fellow broadbrim; Monsieur Defour, a French gentleman who rented the count's sugar works; Pins, Sanderson, Harry, and four ladies, besides the countess and her mother.

A genuine Russian dinner on a great occasion is not quite copied by the English diner à la Russe. On a side-table were placed decanters containing doppel, keppel, cognac, and other spirits, and beside these lay plates of raw herrings, caviare, sardines, and small hard pieces of black bread and white. Those who desired an appetiser swallowed one or two small glasses of spirits and ate herring, caviare, or sardine. The ladies do this as well as the gentlemen. After this necessary and important preliminary, which was executed standing, fork in hand, we were all seated, and the real business commenced. Smart lacqueys in drab liveries and blue facings, with white cravats and gloves, served in successive dishes a dinner, of which, for the sake of those interested in such matters, I will give the menu:

Isschee, a soup made from sour cabbage, and very good when well made; beef-tea; mushroom pie, cut in slices; teegee, a fish nearly equal to salmon; cold veal, with sauce; roast beef; venison; deviled turkey; chickens; all these meats with sauces; wild fowl-game; iced cream, strawberries and cream, confectionary of many kinds, kissell (a sort of jelly), in various colours; apples and jargonelle pears (these pears are in Russia three shillings apiece), raisins, nuts, sweets, coffee, and cigars. The wines were numerous and superb. Black bread and white, baked and roasted potatoes, Dublin and Allsopp's ales, and the favourite London porter at six shillings a bottle. The silver plate was profuse, the crockery fine china; the cookery faultless. The conversation was kept up with spirit, but only between the courses, and each course appeared ready cut up, to be served by the footmen carrying it round.

After dinner there were toasts, accompanied by speeches of a few words each, all but one from the Scotchman, a yard long, in proposing the Count and Countess Pomerin. When the company was in a good humour for anything, the count rose, and said:

"My friends, I have designed a little performance, which I shall now introduce. It is the settlement of a small affair between me and my good friend and tenant Monsieur Defour, now present. I bet him, certain terms, that I should in six weeks tame a wild horse of his. This is the last day of the time specified, and we are within a few hours of its entire expiration. You shall judge between us. Ladies, I beg you will be so kind as to keep your seats, and let no one be in the smallest degree alarmed at what will now take place. Timossy, tell John we are all ready."

We were all sitting in the centre of the hall, with a clear space round us of considerable ex-

tent. The door opened, and a magnificent jet-black charger, of the Arabian breed, bounced into the room, blowing clouds of smoke from his nostrils. He had no bridle nor saddle, nor any attendant. His flowing mane waved in rich masses half way down, and his tail swept the floor.

Some of the gentlemen sprang up from their seats, and the ladies screamed.

"I implore you all to sit quiet; there is no danger in the least," cried the count. "Do sit down." When we were all seated again, he said, "Come here, Nereckta, and kiss me;" and he held his arms out. The horse went straight to the head of the table and held up his great lips to be kissed. "There, now," and the count stamped on the floor twice, "go round the room and make your bow to the ladies." The horse immediately obeyed, and approaching the ladies (who all sat together), bowed four times. But there were six ladies. The count said "Again," but the horse refused. "In the rehearsal," said the count, "we had only four lady dummies. I must pass that part." He then gave him some sweet cake, and stamping three times, told him to go down on his knees and beg pardon for intruding on the company. The animal went gently down on one knee, and bent his head twice to the ground, in great humility.

"Now, then, get up and drink to the health of all here." A tin can was handed to the count, who emptied two bottles of champagne into it, close to the horse's head. He held up his head before drinking, gave a polite neigh to the company, and leisurely drank off the champagne. The count then jumped on his back, and was carried quietly twice round the room.

"The remaining part of the play," said the count, coming off the horse, and laughing, "must be seen elsewhere. Those who have the curiosity, will follow." He passed out by the door, the horse following him. We were all led through a passage to the other end of the building, where there was a broad flight of steps leading to the servants' rooms.

The count pointed to the steps, clapped the horse on the head, and said, "Go, Nereckta." Nereckta obeyed at once, climbed about fifteen steps, turned on the landing, and came down again, carefully picking his way.

"Are you satisfied, my friend," said the count, turning to the Frenchman, "or must I appeal to the judges?"

"There is no occasion; I am satisfied. It is wonderful! I have lost. Take the papers." And he pulled out a bundle of papers and handed them to the count.

No sooner had the count received them, then he tore them up into shreds and scattered them in the lobby. Then, taking from his pocket a sealed packet, he handed it to the Frenchman, saying:

"Here is a new contract on more just and equitable terms. Do you take it, or must I destroy it also?"

"Certainly, count, I will take it; and I say you are generous—very kind."

"That is finished, then," said Pomerin. "Here, John" (he spoke now in English). "Where are you?"

"All right, count," said a voice from the crowd of lookers-on, in the genuine London cabby tone; and a smartly-dressed groom, in racing trim, stepped forward. He was, as to size, a boy of ten, but when you looked into his face you could read five-and-thirty. A neater, more trimly-made little fellow I never saw. He approached and patted the horse, who seemed to welcome him as a dear friend.

"Now, John, just show them what he can do in the other way," said the count. "We have seen the lamb, now we will see the lion. Only once over and back, John."

"All right, count."

We followed to the lawn in front of the house, which was lighted up by pine-torches, and found for what purpose the hurdles and various other structures had been put up in the lawn. The little groom (who was master of the count's stud of best horses) put a racing saddle and bridle on Nereckta, and sprang on his back. Then commenced a scene of galloping and leaping, the horse flitting round the park like a swift bird. This ended the performance, and when we returned to the house to finish the evening, the ladies had retired.

It appeared that Defour had obtained a renewal of his lease or contract, on ridiculously low terms, from the count's German steward, who very likely pocketed a nice thing by the transaction. Sanderson opened the count's eyes to this, as well as many other tricks of the steward. He endeavoured to get the Frenchman to give up his lease, but in vain. Defour, civilly obdurate, refused—until one day the count found him and some of his men cruelly lashing and training an obdurate young black horse. He had been trying to tame this horse for some time, and was only making the animal worse. The count told him so, and said it was his want of skill, not the fault of the horse, that caused the failure. Now the Frenchman's weak point was an overweening opinion of his own skill in horse-flesh. The count, intentionally or not, touched this point so hard, that a bet was made, the end of which we have seen. The count knew the horse, and admired him—and, in conjunction with his English groom, he had soon conquered the temper, and gained the affections of the animal, which was then found to be peculiarly tractable and gentle. Training commenced; many mock dinner-parties had been held, and the horse gradually taught the various movements we had seen. The result was, two hundred roubles to the groom, the horse became the property of the count, and the Frenchman got a new lease on more equitable terms. I saw another exhibition of the same nature in a gentleman's house near St. Petersburg, but it was somewhat less successful. There is nothing that a young Russian noble

enjoys more than an affair of this kind, when horses are, as they commonly are, his peculiar and passionate delight.

RELIQUES.

A WILD, wet night: the driving sleet
Blurs all the lamps along the quay;
The windows shake; the busy street
Is still alive with hurrying feet;
The wind raves from the sea.

So let it rave! My lamp burns bright;
My long day's work is almost done;
I curtain out each sound and sight—
Of all nights in the year, to-night
I choose to be alone.

Alone, with doors and windows fast,
Before my open desk I stand. . . .
Alas! can twelve long months be past,
My hidden, hidden wealth! since last
I held thee in my hand?

So, there it lies! From year to year
I see the ribbon change; the page
Turn yellow; and the very tear
That blots the writing, disappear
And fade away with age.

Mine eyes grow dim when they behold
The precious trifles hoarded there—
A ring of battered Indian gold,
A withered bluebell, and a fold
Of sunny chesnut hair.

Not all the riches of the earth,
Not all the treasures of the sea,
Could buy these house-gods from my hearth;
But yet, the secret of their worth
Must live and die with me.

HAIL COLUMBIA—SQUARE!

It would be a curious thing to enter into an examination of the various changes of condition to which a man may be subjected in a single day. He may get up in the morning strong and well, and be put to bed at night a cripple. He may get up rich and lie down poor, or in the morning be a beggar and in the evening a millionaire. At six o'clock in the forenoon he may be a father, and before the clock has made its round he may be childless. To take less exceptional cases, we know that it is possible for any individual who feels so disposed, to breakfast in Paris and dine in London, or to stand in the morning in Cheapside or the Strand, and in the evening by the dark waters of a Westmoreland lake. The clergyman is called away from the wedding-feast, to the death-bed of a pauper; the doctor is in the middle of a good story at his own dinner-table when he is summoned to a garret, where good stories and good dinners are equally unknown.

But surely one of the most extraordinary and rapid changes of condition, is that experienced by the traveller who shall journey, as fast as wheels can carry him, from the western to the eastern extremity of the metropolis at this most brilliant moment of the great London season. He starts at South Kensington. He passes rows and rows of palaces. The open windows are full

of flowers. There is such store of perfume in them that they are reckless, and, besides making the rooms within delicious, scatter largesse of rich scent to the passer-by; sun-blinds gaily striped are drawn down, but still through the laced curtains glimpses may be seen of splendid decoration in the interior of the house; something may be observed, too, through the open door, for the servants have discovered that it is of no use shutting it, the callers being so frequent. So they stand in groups in the hall and on the threshold. The small broughams drawn by ponies as the moment's fashion decrees that they must be, the barouches in which ladies recline at their ease, and all sorts of other equipages which I would name if I had the luck to be a coachmaker, flash about this wonderful neighbourhood with a swift precision which does equal credit to the hand and the eye of the driver. The diplomatist jogs by on a quiet ugly horse, which he looks upon as a liver-shaking machine, and which costs far more than the fiery animal bestridden by the groom behind. The diplomatist sits very far back in his saddle, does not rise in his stirrups, rides with a loose rein and a seat to match, and would certainly tumble off if his horse were to shy. From the great high-mounted chariot with the armorial panels, with the two footmen behind, and the inevitable old lady with a wig inside, to the buggy drawn by a high stepper and driven by a minor with expectations, all is brilliant and imposing; even the Hansom cabs which frequent these regions have a brighter look than other Hansom cabs, and affect tartan panels and varnish, after a singular and vain-glorious sort. Nor have we done with the different kinds of vehicles even yet, for, about this neighbourhood, ladies will drive themselves in little basket carriages: while the curricles and the fogs are not unknown. Is it a fashionable watering-place or a brilliant capital? Are care, illness, sorrow, death, known in such a place? Who are all these people, and how are all these palaces maintained? Where do the inhabitants—where does the money—come from?

Bright awnings quivering in the summer breeze, echoes of gay voices, rollings of light wheels, quick stepping of untamed horses, distant echoings of military bands—pleasure, luxury, extravagance, have it all their own way here, and a jovial way it is.

But the sun, which brings out the perfumes of Belgravian flower-vases, glances on the striped awnings, twinkles on the silvered harness, casts bright gleams here, and broad and luminous shadows there, this same sun has in another neighbourhood (about which we have something to say) other and dirtier work to do. In a certain other region of this town it has to illuminate streets and lanes so narrow and so tortuous, that it is a wonder its straight beams can ever get to the ground. Strange it is that they are not stifled, to begin with, among the stacks of gnarled and ponderous chimneys, for if the fire is a purifying agent and sends the noxious vapours of a room up the chimney

with the smoke, it is certain that such chimney-produce must present some obstacle to the downward progress of those already sickening rays, and taint them heavily as they descend. From the roof where the foul rags wrung out in foul water, hang to dry, the sunbeams shorn of their glory somewhat, but in no wise of their heat, pass down the dangling bit of rotten clothes-line to the garret window. This chamber being fireless, may be supposed to vomit out its impurities quite unalloyed by the adulteration of smoke. The dead child, the other and younger child sickening of the fever which released the first, the horrible clothing saturated with humanity, the mounting odours of the whole ill-drained house coming up to this undrained room—all these things are let out to taint the sunbeam whose course we are following, as it passes on its way. Luckily it has not much farther to go. These houses in Bethnal-green are not of lofty stature, and the garret windows are seldom more than three stories from the street; sometimes the houses are only two, or even one story above the pavement.

Each of these rooms, let and under-let, tenanted by from four to eight times the number of persons that could live in it with a common regard to health or decency—each of them casts forth its great volume of impurities for the sunbeams to suck in, as they pass on to the ground that lies parched and defiled beneath them. Of the particular horrors, either moral or physical, which those dusty rays reveal as they pass from one story to another, it would be useless, if it were practicable, to speak in detail. Violence, cruelty, immodesty, uncleanness, are here unmitigated and almost unconcealed. Everything is perverted. Childhood is old and careful. Infants, imitating the violence they have seen about them from their earliest recollection, are shrill and shrewish with the smaller infants placed under their care. The home is perverted from being a haven of rest, which the man longs to get to, and is become an earthly hell which he has cause to dread. The women are perverted to be unwomanly, and the men, for the most part, to be like the brute creation, with just enough humanity to make them more elaborate in brutishness than beasts can by their nature be. The air is perverted to carry from window to window the monstrous vapours encircled in a compound interest of pollution as it passes on. The sun's rays are perverted, and instead of bringing wholesomeness and purity with them, draw up new wealth of nastiness from every nook and corner, and, heating it to fever-pitch, breed Death far and near.

Of a certainty this is a strong contrast to the region first described, and he who passes swiftly from the one neighbourhood to the other may fairly ask himself whether he be still in the same world, instead of the same town.

How terrible the change. The sights and sounds how cruelly different. The awnings here, are represented by some streaming scrap of rag drying at a window, or by the patched

umbrella at the street stall. The flowers are the morsels of vegetables cast out as too bad for even Shoreditch nutriment. The carriages are costermongers' trucks; for music here are the cries of suffering children, or curses and vituperation—which the echoes are charged with night and day. Are these slouching sulky distorted creatures, who lurk and lower along the sordid thoroughfares, the same animals as the gallants of the other part of the town, the men of upright carriage and free and open looks, cantering in Rotten-row, or lounging in faultless clothes at the entrance to that luxurious place? Are the ladies who lie back in their open carriages, as if their sofas were put upon wheels, or who rein with powerful curb their hardly restrained horses, flesh and blood like to the masculine and bony hags who scream at their children as they drag them from the gutter, and provoke their husbands to increased wrath as they stagger from the public-house?

Yet it does not take an hour to get from the sight of the first condition to the sight of the second. At one o'clock in the afternoon you may be listening to pleasant and prosperous sounds, inhaling sweet odours, and seeing around you only suggestions of wealth and happiness, and at two you may plant yourself before a rag and bone shop, with a print in the window of Justice tightly bandaged, weighing a pound of dripping in her scales, and giving the highest price for it compatible with a reasonable profit. In less than one short hour, you can pass into the regions of intensest squalor, where every sense is offended, just as in the other neighbourhood every one of the five senses was comforted and pleased.

Is this great contrast one to which many persons subject themselves? Are there those who, of their own free will, pass from the first scene to the second? Nay, are there those whose lot is cast in the pleasant land, and who leave it to go into the land of pain and horror? There are those who make the pilgrimage who make it from choice, who cannot enjoy their own comforts while they know of such unutterable misery, who start on a great mission from the west to the east, and who come back leaving behind them goodly work accomplished.

To record what has been done by one such person is the main object of this paper.

Most people in this town know something of the wretchedness that prevails in those great outlying districts which border the city of London on its eastern side. Some of us have been obliged to go into one of these neighbourhoods on some business matter; some of us have gone to see what such places are like. In these days of railway travelling, many travellers starting on a pleasure-trip have an Asmodeus glimpse of courts and alleys, and houses and rooms, which they would otherwise never see, and, as the train drags slowly along at starting, get opportunities of beholding a little garret-life the memory of which miles of steaming among meadows and trees will not dispel. Now to all those who have passed through, or journeyed

above, a poor neighbourhood, and who have thought sorrowfully of the misery around them, it will be a great comfort to know that such misery may be alleviated in a substantial and enduring manner, and that the frightful condition in which the poor exist is not an inevitable and irremediable evil, but, on the contrary, one to which it is perfectly simple and easy to apply a remedy, if we will but exert ourselves in the right direction.

In one of the remotest and most impoverished parts of the remote and impoverished district known generically as Bethnal-green, there exists a certain piece of ground, which, together with the buildings that stand upon it, goes by the name of Columbia-square. I believe it used to be called Nora Scotia Gardens. Columbia-square is very little known. The pedestrian who would find it out must keep his eyes about him, and ask his way of all sorts of people, while he who would approach it in a cab had best hire the vehicle by the hour, as the driver will get through a considerable amount of distance in wandering up and down and round and round the Bethnal-green streets before he discovers Columbia-square.

The place is distinct enough from all the surrounding neighbourhood when you *do* get within range of it, and would infallibly attract your notice at once, even if you had previously heard nothing about it, and were *not* in search of it.

The surrounding neighbourhood is very dwarfish in height; Columbia-square is composed of houses of a considerable elevation. The surrounding neighbourhood is very dirty; Columbia-square is spotlessly clean. The surrounding neighbourhood is stuffy and close; Columbia-square is airy and open. The surrounding neighbourhood is highly flavoured as to odour; Columbia-square is as sweet (as the saying goes) as a nut.

It was a happy day for that miserable district of Bethnal-green, and indirectly, no doubt, for other of the poorer London neighbourhoods, when the abject wretchedness of the inhabitants became known to one whose profound sympathy with human suffering is united to a rare ability to relieve it, and a wonderful discretion in the manner of relief. We are used to find the name of Miss Burdett Coutts associated with acts of mercy. Her praise is sung in every apartment of these Bethnal-green houses which she has built, and no written panegyric, be it ever so strongly expressed, could equal the silent testimony borne by the neat convenient rooms, by the bearing of the inhabitants whose lives are altered by the self-respect which the place engenders, by the wholesome faces of the children living in good air and in clean and decent human habitations.

Columbia-square is a four-sided enclosure of considerable size. The houses are arranged in four blocks, each of which is so large as to contain on an average about five-and-forty sets of apartments, or complete tenements. There is an open court-yard in the middle of the parallelogram which these houses form, and free ac-

cess by an opening at each corner. The effect of the whole is extremely pleasant, and the design of the buildings reflects great credit on the architect. It is very remarkable to see how much may be done with little expense, by a judicious architect, to make the poorest domestic architecture agreeable to the eye.

To plan such a range of buildings, intended for such a purpose as these are meant to fulfil, is by no means so easy a thing as some people might imagine. It must be remembered that the very object of building these houses was to bring together an enormous number of very poor people, never accustomed to live where any amount of cleanliness was so much as possible. It was necessary to render it almost impracticable for those of the inhabitants who had not previously been able to form any habits of cleanliness, to make the place unbearable to those who had. Accumulation of dirt, foul air, dark corners, stuffed-up passages, these and the like dangers must be carefully guarded against, and light and air must be everywhere.

Are the dangers indicated above, guarded against in all our dwelling-houses at the West-end? Do air and light pervade all the nooks and corners of a modern residence? More so than they did, no doubt. The new neighbourhoods are generally better planned as to these matters than the old parts of Bloomsbury, or even May-fair; but there is still enough folly and ignorance shown in the construction of modern houses to make many a West-end tenant wish that Columbia-square were in a fashionable neighbourhood, and that he had the happy chance of getting lodgings there.

Nothing could be better than the arrangement of these buildings, which is due to the thoughtful skill of Mr. H. A. Darbishire, the architect who planned them. It has been said that the square is open at each of the four corners. The corridors on every floor receive light and air from windows opening upon these free spaces. As they communicate also with a staircase, open to the air and carried up the entire central portion of each building, a complete system of ventilation is established. Into these long corridors the different suites of apartments open.

These are of various sizes and rents, but each is complete in itself. The commonest arrangement, and that for which probably there is the greatest demand, is one of two rooms. The first of these is the living-room of the family, and is fitted with a good kitchen range with a boiler and oven, and an enclosed place by the side of the fireplace for coals. This room will measure ordinarily, twelve feet by ten; the bedroom, opening into it, about twelve feet by eight. The rooms are lighted and aired by large windows, and are further ventilated by apertures in the external wall, and in the wall which communicates with the main corridor.

In addition to these tenements there are others of three rooms, adapted to larger families; there are single rooms to let, as well; sometimes these single rooms are occupied by additional members of families living in the two-roomed suites;

sometimes, but very rarely, by single people. It is for the use of families chiefly, that these blocks are intended, and by families they are chiefly tenanted.

Some discretion is exercised, and most rightly, in deciding how many members of a family the rooms will hold: though the utmost license consistent with common decency and propriety is allowed. Combinations of families are entirely discouraged. In the event of a family, composed say of a man and his wife, being in possession of one of the *three-roomed* suites, it would consist with the regulations of the place that a relative of either the husband or the wife should sleep in one of the rooms: sharing with his relations the common living-room. In a two-roomed suite, however, no such thing would be allowed: the father and mother being the only adult persons permitted in so small a tenement. If there be a brother, a father, or mother, who wishes to live with the family, he or she must pay for an additional single room. Under-letting is entirely prohibited.

To compensate for this loss of emolument, the rents of these clean and delightful residences are arranged on the lowest scale possible. Single rooms range, according to size, from two shillings to two and ninepence per week; suites of two rooms are to be had at three and sixpence, three and eightpence (these with additional conveniences), and four and sixpence: the last being of extra size. The three-roomed suites are four shillings, four and sixpence, and five and sixpence per week, according to size and convenience.

It should be mentioned that between the suites of apartments, dividing them in most cases from each other, are double arrangements of lavatories, baths, and other conveniences, communicating directly with the open air, and with the corridors as well. The drainage connected with these parts of the building is excellent. A trap opens in the floor of each corridor, down which the inhabitants of the different rooms shoot their dust and refuse, into a great dust-hole underneath. Surely, every one who lives in a house where the dust-bin is so placed as that the dustmen have to carry its contents through the house to get to their carts, has to envy the inhabitants of this Columbia-square. And, indeed, they look enviable. There is a prosperous appearance about the whole place; and the children who play in the open ground in the middle of the square, are as superior in neatness and cleanliness to the children who live in the neighbouring gutters, as the rooms in Columbia-square are, to the rooms in Virginia-row close by.

It gives one new hope and courage to observe the success of this undertaking, and the good effect of the place upon its inhabitants. Those children playing in the open space, are clean, because it is possible, and even easy, to make them so. At the top of each of the four blocks of which the square is composed, under the roof, occupying nearly the whole length of the building, is a great laundry and drying space,

where the linen is aired as completely as it is dried. Here is accommodation for eight or ten women at once. Each has her copper, with a little fireplace underneath, each has two tubs provided, and each is screened by a partition from her next neighbour. For the common use, stands, in the middle of the laundry, a machine which, by mere force of rapid revolution, wrings the linen completely, and saves a wonderful deal of hard labour and wear and tear of clothing. For these great conveniences the mother of the family has not got even to cross the threshold of the house.

Yet though gas is provided to light the corridors and staircases, though these are kept clean by two resident porters under a resident superintendent—though there is all this appearance of supply of gratuitous comfort and help, this place is not an almshouse nor a charitable institution. The independence of the tenants has been borne in mind. The undertaking pays.

This is one of the most remarkable and important things connected with the matter. Valuable and attractive as the institution is, as a monument of a benevolent purpose humanely carried out, it is almost more valuable in the proof it affords that even an undertaking on this magnificent scale—for, comparatively speaking, on a magnificent scale it is—will yet bring in a profit of nearly three per cent. This profit is not enough for general enterprise; it will never in these days tempt the speculator; but it is a profit, and a solid and secure one.

And so—having rendered our poor tribute of deep admiration to this achievement of the most nobly generous and most experienced philanthropist of our age—we come next to the important question: Is it possible to render the building of decent houses for the poor, a speculation which shall be sufficiently promising, to engage the attention of the purely commercial man? Individual benevolence has its limits. It cannot rebuild the poor districts of London. To carry out effectually the project so nobly initiated, the "concern" must be made to pay better.

To put this idea upon a sound basis, the capitalist must be convinced that he is investing his money safely, and to advantage, in erecting dwellings for the poor. It is not unreasonable to suppose that even Columbia-square might have been brought more temptingly within this condition. Some money was expended in ornament; more in separate baths, of which there are several; more in a handsome reading-room, made at the sacrifice of space that might have been devoted to two additional sets of apartments. As to the first, it was an indulgence of taste which the foundress allowed herself; the second are special luxuries which the poor man hardly needs in his own dwelling; and thirdly, it is found that the reading-room is very little used; for the sufficient reason that the inmates choose rather to spend their spare

time in their own comfortable rooms with their families. But for these items of expense there would have been a slight reduction of the scale of rents, or a higher interest realised on the capital sunk.

Economical enterprise would save under all the foregoing heads, and would probably purpose to achieve less at first. But whatever it might do, it would, if well directed to the object in hand, do for the poor in the main, what the benevolent foundress of Columbia-square has done. It would supply the poor man—at a profit—with the advantages derivable from Capital. With these advantages he cannot supply himself, because he has no Capital. But he thankfully and readily pays for the good domestic results which Capital can ensure him. Tell the very poor man indeed that Cleanliness is next to Godliness, and that he must set up a good supply of water, a copper, and a washing-tub; and he will show you his small and varying week's wages, and ask you where on earth the purchase money is to come from? But let Capital supply those things for him on a greater scale, making his washing-tub a laundry, and his copper a furnace, and giving *itself*, as well as him, the advantages derivable from combination,—that is to say, from the things being used not by him alone in a corner, but in common by many people; and he will cheerfully pay Capital a handsome interest, and be an immeasurably better and happier creature. Capital can build any number of Columbia-squares, with any number of departures and deductions from the now existing Columbia-square; but it will, for instance, light its corridors and staircases with gas, because, there being a combination of people to provide with artificial light at night, to lay on gas is to take the easiest, cheapest, and most practicable way of lighting them. Alone and without Capital the poor man pays for his wretched candle and his own discomfort and degradation at least as much as this gas will cost him. He has nothing but income, and what Capital wants is income, and it will be a blessed day that brings the two to the advantage of both, to go hand in hand together through the humblest ways and details of life.

Let, for instance, a portion at least of the munificent gift lately made by Mr. Peabody to the London poor be regarded as for benevolent, yet profitable, investment, not to benefit a few fortunate individuals, but the whole mass of the London poor. To raise buildings for the poor on the surest foundation, they must be self-supporting. And to make them self-supporting, two things only must be considered—the barest, commonest decency, and the preservation of health. We must think of the miles and miles of town we have got to reclaim from worse horrors than one dares to write of, and we must not be contented to furnish luxurious accommodation for a favoured few—and those not the poorest of all—but simple brick and mortar structures, which shall afford decent and wholesome house-room to chimney-sweepers and dustmen. We must provide shelter for the

costermonger and the coalheaver, and leave the case of the small clerk and the well-to-do journeyman for future consideration.

EXAMINE THE PRISONER!

WHEN Mr. Jonathan Wild and Monsieur Robert Macaire are placed in the dock in their respective countries, on trial—the one, say for downright “murder,” or for “burglariously breaking and entering certain premises;” the other, for murder too—there is a very remarkable difference in the manner in which the two gentlemen are dealt with during the investigation. Mr. Wild, though actually present, is, practically, no more than a mere stock or stone, or caput mortuum; and for any assistance that his presence affords to the inquiry, he might as well be in the prison-yard or condemned cell. He is stolidly ignored; he is spoken of persistently, as though he were absent; motives are assigned for his actions; his course of conduct is derived from pure speculation, as though he were a hundred miles away; efforts are made to reason out what was passing in his mind at a particular moment. In short, an unaccountable fiction is kept up that he who is present, is absent.

M. Macaire, on the contrary, placed between two gendarmes, is the very essence of vitality. He is the centre actor of the whole piece. M. le Premier Président is always asking him questions, and he himself is always answering those questions, or making little speeches, or interrupting witnesses, or being interrupted. Sometimes, indeed, he grows hot and violent, and gets into personal altercation with M. le Premier Président, with the result of being dragged a little roughly from the room by his two gendarmes. But, on the whole, it is certain that M. Macaire is regularly tried as M. Macaire, and that he has such a trial as could not take place in the absence of M. Macaire; whereas, the other gentleman, his fellow-creature in misfortune, Mr. Wild, is merely a puppet on trial, ornamenting the vacuity of the dock.

This is rather a curious difference, and the result is no less curious. This opposite treatment in our country arises from a certain sacredness with which the character of criminal is invested. That every man is presumed innocent until proved to be guilty, is the grand maxim: which is yet developed further, into Every guilty man is presumed innocent, until his neighbour shall prove him guilty. The law watches over him tenderly and affectionately, checks him if he would speak, pretends not to hear him if he *has* spoken, sets him free if he has been adroit enough to commit his crime in the absence of witnesses, or what may be called the dumb testimony of circumstances.

With M. Macaire, on the contrary, there is no such tenderness. At every damning piece of evidence the president asks him, “Accused, what do you say to that?” If accused be innocent, he will thankfully accept the opportu-

nity, and will probably give a satisfactory explanation. If he be guilty, and the statement be really embarrassing, he will invent a lie on the spot, which will be inconsistent with some other part of his statement, and will have the effect of entangling him still further. He will be allowed, eventually, to explain whatever share he took in the transaction. On the supposition of M. Macaire's being innocent, such a statement, however unsupported, will be satisfactory so far as it goes; and, if it be fair and candid and straightforward, will be very welcome to a jury. If he be guilty, such a statement must necessarily be an artificial view of the case, and being sure to be full of contradiction, will only become a further proof of guilt.

It being notorious that a large per-centage of criminals escape justice through the working of this too lenient rule, thinking men have latterly turned their attention to the question, and it has been seriously discussed whether the French system might not be introduced into England with advantage. The objections are, of course, old platitudes, based on the maxim just given, that The law presumes every man innocent until proved guilty: that it is better that ninety-nine guilty men should escape than that one innocent man should be punished; with a final appeal to that spirit of British fair play and liberty of subject which is imperishably planted in every Briton's heart. Finally, it would be subversive of the grand spirit and practice of British law, bequeathed to us by our forefathers, and imperishably, &c. &c.

Without controverting these noble sentiments, it may be said, in the first place, that so perfect are the arrangements, so accurate the investigations, which precede a trial, that, practically speaking, an innocent person is very rarely placed in the dock. Or, if he be so placed, he is still more rarely found guilty. We must, therefore, amend the noble sentiment given above. No guilty person is presumed to be guilty until he be proved to be so by the testimony of others.

The “perfection of human wisdom” is, however, full of inconsistency. It will shut its ears carefully to any verbal explanation Mr. Wild may wish to offer, and yet, at the same time, will send policemen to rifle Mr. Wild's trunks, drawers, letters, and written diaries. These private memorials of Mr. Wild, as strictly personal to Mr. Wild as any parole statement he might make, there is no scruple of using against him. Also, the police-officer who arrests Mr. Wild, will caution him in an unintelligible formula, that any statement he may make will be used in evidence against him. Thus, if Mr. Wild in a fit of honest indignation blurt out some admission damaging to his interest, that is carefully registered and reproduced on his trial.

Formerly the self-same objections were made against the introduction of personal evidence in civil trials: until eighteen hundred and fifty no plaintiff or defendant could be examined.

It was considered that the personal interest involved would so colour such testimony, as to make it valueless; that the temptation to perjury would be almost irresistible. However, it was felt that it was a perfect absurdity to exclude the evidence of the two leading agents in the transaction, and to shut out the stories of the injured and injuring parties—perhaps the only two persons who could really throw any light on the transaction. Even going back to the primitive Rousseau state of nature principle, it was felt that the wise mystery-man, or chief, sitting under his tree, or even Solomon in his temple, would first call the complaining party before him, and hear his narrative, and then hear the defending party; and then listen to neighbours and accept statements in corroboration or refutation. As to danger of perjury, a personal statement would need to be fortified from other sources: and there was always the danger before false swearing, of contradiction arising out of the truth, and of severe and searching cross-examination. If no moral sense restrain, there are the pains and penalties of an indictment for perjury suspended like a Damocles' sword over the witness-box.

The real inconsistency of the law, in having gone thus far and no farther, will be evident from the fact that many civil trials become virtually criminal trials, and that a plaintiff or defendant may be changed into an accused, and examined, as it were, in the dock, on charges involving his liberty and life. Thus, an ejectment may have been brought against some family to try the title to the estates—an ejectment founded on a concocted case, on forged deeds, wills, or parish registers. The plaintiff in such an action may be cross-examined on these criminal acts, and on *his own testimony* subjected to penalties and punishment. The case of the Reverend Mr. Hatch is fresh in the public memory. He himself was in the dock, and his mouth was therefore closed. But afterwards he indicted the prosecutrix for perjury; and with a change of positions, he going into the witness-box and she into the dock, he was enabled by *his own testimony*, which he was before prevented from offering, to convict her of perjury. The getting at justice by such accidents as these, should surely not be part of a system which boasts itself the perfection of human reason. Appealing, again, to the elementary stages of society, it will be found that the conduct of the master of a family, on any heinous dereliction in such family, is based on a more obvious and rational plan. He sends forthwith for the culprit, servant or offspring, to his study, and asks him boldly what he can say for himself? He does not call Jeames, or Tummus, or Charley, or Jack, before him and sternly refuse to accept any but direct proof from third parties concerning the alleged delinquency of Jeames, Tummus, Charley, or Jack. He examines Jeames, Tummus, Charley, or Jack. If the supposed culprit make fair, open, candid statements, and bear a little cross-examination without being shaken, he will be dismissed "without a stain on his character." If, on the contrary, Mary

Anne has been out "without leave," and bolsters up her case with a falsehood, the terrible engine of cross-examination will break Mary Anne down.

The advantage of such a change in our criminal procedure may be looked at in two ways, namely, in confounding the guilty, and in aiding the innocent to clear themselves. What would be the great yearning in the heart of an innocent man charged with a criminal offence? It would be a hungering after speech, a sense of bursting with suppressed vindication, a longing to be allowed to speak out, and explain how all occurred. When a witness mentions a fact apparently damaging, how easily could a word from *him* explain it away. But his lips are sealed.

Where the accused is really guilty, what an inestimable advantage and swift short cut to justice would arise from a severe raking cross-examination. How would those artfully-concocted defences which prisoners on trial for murder put forward, through the mouths of others, be utterly crumbled away under this efficacious test of truth. The grand system of manufactured alibis would melt away; for these being now presented to counsel through the medium of witnesses whose antecedents they are mostly unacquainted with, and whose preceding and concomitant actions they know little of, are very difficult to expose. But a false alibi is after all but an artificial system of facts, and which must of necessity be at variance with the *real* system. So that, if the points at variance can be discovered and proved, it must break down.

It will be felt as to the cases of Palmer and Smethurst what a valuable auxiliary this would have been to the prosecution. But it will be said again that, in the case of a person on trial for his life, the temptation to perjury will be irresistible, and that at all risks he will try to "swear himself" out of his horrible position. To this the simple answer is, that such a statement would not be made to depend on the *credit* of the prisoner, which would be sadly impeached by his situation, and that, therefore, no oath would be received from him. Any force to be derived from his statement would rest on its own natural probability, and on proper and reasonable appearance of corroboration. Many innocent persons, it will be said, may be unfairly dealt with in a severe cross-examination, and may, from nervousness and timidity, conduct themselves so as to have all the exterior deportment of guilt. But the same objection will apply to civil investigations, where the practice is not found to work such mischief; and the judge is at hand, in case of any such misapprehension, to restore the proper tone and appreciation. There is never any fear, in an English trial, of the process of the court pressing too severely on an accused. It deals with him too tenderly. After all, even in the case of an innocent man finding himself in the dock, there must be present, if not guilt, a certain laches or carelessness, or indirect culpability of some sort, which has brought him there; and for this he must pay a little penalty. Thus, if

he complains of severe cross-examination, it is his own act in some degree that has brought it on him.

They manage this matter, like many other matters, far better in France. The French imperial judges *must* assign counsel to *every* prisoner, no matter what his offence. This is a substantial benefit, far more useful to the innocent-accused person than the questionable tenderness we have been discussing. And, above all, there is, in France, a Court of Criminal Appeal, wherein wrongs done by inflamed and excited juries may be set right, and a new trial ordered.

The venerable Lord Brougham, Mr. Stuart Wortley, Sir Erskine Perry, and a host of legal authorities, are in favour of such a change as has been here discussed. There is little doubt but it will receive a fresh indorsement from the great law reformers, at the coming Social Science Congress.

CAT STORIES.

HERODOTUS tells us that "on every occasion of a fire in Egypt, the strangest prodigy occurs with the cats. The inhabitants allow the fire to rage as it pleases, while they stand about at intervals, and watch these animals, which, slipping by the men, or else leaping over them, rush headlong into the flames. When this happens, the Egyptians are in deep affliction. If a cat dies in a private house by a natural death, all the inmates of the house shave their eyebrows; on the death of a dog, they shave the head and the whole of the body. The cats are taken on their decease to the city of Bubastis, where they are embalmed, after which they are buried in certain sacred repositories." Sir J. G. Wilkinson, in his notes on the above, and on the capital punishment inflicted on those who wilfully killed any sacred animal, says: "The law was, as Herodotus says, against a person killing them on purpose, but the prejudiced populace in after times did not always keep within the law, and Diodorus declares that if any person killed an ibis or a cat, even unintentionally, it infallibly cost him his life, the multitude collecting and tearing him to pieces. For fear of which calamity, if anybody found one of them dead, he stood at a distance, and calling with a loud voice, made every demonstration of grief, and protested that it was found lifeless. And to such an extent did they carry this custom, that they could not be deterred by any representation from their own magistrates, from killing a Roman who had accidentally killed a cat.

Herodotus also relates that the number of domestic animals in Egypt was very great, and would be still greater were it not for what befalls the cats. When the females have kittened, he says, the toms, provoked by the exclusive attention paid by the mothers to their offspring, are in the habit of seizing the kittens, carrying them off, and killing them, but they do not eat them afterwards. This curious artifice is attended with success.

The city of Bubastis was the chief seat of the worship of the Egyptian divinity of that name, called *Pasht*. The cat was sacred to this goddess, who herself was represented in the form of a cat, or of a female with the head of a cat, some specimens of which representations are still extant. The ancients identified Bubastis with the Greek Artemis (or Diana). Each was regarded as the goddess of the moon. "The cat, also, was believed by the ancients to stand in some relation to the moon, for Plutarch says that the cat was the symbol of the moon on account of her different colours, her busy ways at night, and her giving birth to twenty-eight young ones during the course of her life, which is exactly the number of the phases of the moon." (Smith's Dictionary.) In another place, however, Plutarch gives a different account of the symbolic meaning of the cat. In the Egyptian figures the cat is not always clearly distinguishable from the lion. It appears as the type of the coins of Bubastis. Cats do certainly enjoy themselves on moonlight nights; and there appears something appropriate in their ancient consecration to the moon. They certainly do make an awful noise, sometimes, on moonlight nights; who has not been startled on some such night by a sudden burst of squalling of cats under his window? How they must have revelled under a bright Egyptian moon in the streets and porticos of Bubastis!

It might occur to some that "puss" is derived from that Egyptian name *Pasht*; but perhaps it is best to acquiesce in the derivation from the Latin *pusus* (a little boy), or *pusa* (a little girl).

Now, for a short reference to the natural history of the cat. Most persons are aware that the feline tribe comprises, besides cats—lions, tigers, leopards, and lynxes. Most persons have heard of the beautiful contrivance by which the claws of these animals are preserved constantly sharp: being drawn, when not used, by certain tendons, within a sheath or integument, while only the soft parts of the foot come in contact with the ground, thus enabling the animal to tread noiselessly. The roughness of the cat's tongue is due to a multitude of horny papillæ (much stronger, of course, in lions and tigers), by which it is materially helped to keep itself clean: a most important point, for cleanness is a necessity to cats, inasmuch as if they had the slightest smell about them, their prey would detect their presence, and never come within their reach. As it is, the cat is so free from smell, that she may sit close to the holes of mice without their being aware of it, although they possess a fine sense of smell. A cat never eats a morsel of anything, whatever it is, without afterwards sitting down to clean and wipe its face and lips. The caution for which it is so remarkable is likewise evinced in its choice of secluded spots for bringing up its offspring; very often some hole or corner little thought of by the inmates of the house; if the young be removed and placed elsewhere, the mother will frequently take them again and again to the place chosen by herself. Another characteristic

of the domestic cat is an instinctive knowledge of the presence of danger. Even a chimney on fire, or the presence of strange workmen in the house, will make it very restless and uneasy, and on such occasions it will sometimes not go to rest even during the night. Every animal is endowed with peculiar means of self-defence; and as the cat cannot trust, like the hare, to speed, on the approach of danger it watches its enemy, occasionally taking side glances, or looking round for a place of refuge. On these occasions, notwithstanding its natural nervousness, it maintains great coolness. If a hole or shelter be near, it waits for an opportunity, or until its enemy looks away, and then rushes under cover, or runs up a tree or a wall, and immediately sits down and watches its enemy. If driven to an actual encounter, the smallness of its mouth and jaws preclude the use of its teeth to any great extent, but it can inflict considerable injury, and acute pain, with its sharp claws, which perhaps no dog except a bull-dog can bear; indeed, few dogs like to attack a cat at bay, though they all run after them. It is curious, too, that once in a place of safety it never seeks to leave it, or loses sight of its enemy. A cat on the safe side of an area railing will sit down and coolly watch a dog barking furiously at it.

Its care and solicitude for its offspring are excessive and touching. If attacked while rearing them it will not run away, but stands and defends them against any odds; like the hare in similar circumstances, the cat evinces immense power and courage, no matter how formidable the enemy may be. Of course, the females of all animals possess more or less of this quality. The domestic cat is always proud of its captured prey, and seldom fails to bring and show it to the inmates of the family it lives with, announcing its success by a plaintive sort of mew-ing. A relative to whom the writer is indebted for these remarks on the characteristics and habits of the cat, wrote lately: "Some nights ago my cat, who has lately caught eleven mice, awoke me in the middle of the night. It sat down by the bedside and mewed, while it rubbed itself backwards and forwards against the bedposts. I had no idea what was the matter, but felt sure something was. I lighted the candle, and found a dead mouse quite close to me. Satisfied that I had examined its capture, it took it off, and, after playing with it for an hour, ate it up, leaving, as usual, the tail and paws." In country or farm-houses, a cat never fails to bring home birds, mice, and in southern climes, lizards, and even snakes. She does this, however, very much in proportion to the amount of kindness bestowed upon her at home, and, if this be altogether lacking, the prey is only shown to other cats living in the same house, or to her own young, if she happens to have any; often, indeed, she brings her trophy immediately and only to her young.

The cat will play with her young up to a certain age, and allow them to pull her about all day. When they are old enough to shift for themselves, she not only ceases to care for

them, but any attempt on their part to play with her is immediately put a stop to. The senses of smelling, hearing, and sight, are acute in cats, of which it is said there are thirty distinct species. Being an animal which hunts both by day and night, the structure of its visual organs is adjusted for both. The retina, or expansion of the optic nerve, is most sensitive to the stimulus of light; hence, a well-marked ciliary muscle contracts the pupil to a mere vertical fissure during the day, while in the dark the pupil dilates enormously, and lets in as much light as possible. But even this would be insufficient, for cats have to look for their prey in holes, cellars, and other places where little or no light can penetrate. Hence, the cat is furnished with a bright, metal-like, lustrous membrane called the Tapetum, which lines part of the hollow globe of the eye, and sheds considerable light on the image of an object thrown on the retina. This membrane is, I believe, common to all vertebrated animals, but is especially beautiful and lustrous in nocturnal animals. The herbivora, such as the ox and sheep, have the Tapetum of the finest enamelled green colour, provided probably to suit the nature of their food, which is green. The subject, however, of the various colours of the Tapetum in different animals is not yet understood. The sensibility of the retina in cats is so great that neither the contraction of the pupil nor the closing of the eyelids would alone afford them sufficient protection from the action of the light. Hence, in common with most animals, the cat is furnished with a *nictitating* membrane, which is, in fact, a third eyelid, sliding over the transparent cornea, beneath the common eyelids. This membrane is not altogether opaque, but translucent, allowing light to fall on the retina, and acting as it were like a shade. The nictitating membrane is often seen in the cat when she slowly opens her eyes from a calm and prolonged sleep. It is well developed in the eagle, and enables him to gaze steadfastly on the sun's unclouded disk.

The lateral movements of the head in cats are not so extensive as in the owl, but are nevertheless considerable. A cat can look round, pretty far behind it, without moving its body: which might be apt to startle its prey. The skin of the cat is very full and loose, in order that all its movements in all possible directions and circumstances may be free and unrestrained. For this purpose, too, all the joints which connect its bones together are extremely loose and free. Thus the cat is enabled to get through small apertures, to leap from great heights, and even to fall in an unfavourable posture with little or no injury to itself. Its ears are not so movable as those of some other animals, but are more so than in very many animals. The shape of the external ear, or rather cartilaginous portion, is admirably adapted to intercept sounds. The natural posture is forward and outward, so as to catch sounds proceeding from the front and sides. The upper half, however, is movable, and by means of a

thin layer of muscular fibres it is made to curve backward, and receive sounds from the rear. Although a cat cannot lick its face and head, it nevertheless cleans these parts thoroughly. In fact, as we often observe, a cat licks its right paw for a long time, and then brushes down the corresponding side of the head and face, and when this is accomplished it does the same with the other paw and corresponding side. Grass is very needful to cats. The food and prey they eat, often disorder the stomach. On such occasions it eats a little grass, which, however, goes no further than the fauces and commencement of the œsophagus; these are irritated by the jagged and saw-like margins of the blades of grass; and this irritation is, by a reflex action, communicated to the stomach, which by a spasmodic action rejects its vitiated secretion.

The cat, like all other animals, is most sensitive to the great talisman we call kindness, and expresses its wants, confidence, and gratitude, equally as much as, if not more than, the dog. It will fawn, rub itself against, and mew to, any member of the family it lives with, and will indicate its comfort and contentment by purring. If ill-used, however, it becomes exceedingly shy and diffident, and if once it has had cause to mistrust a person it rarely and with difficulty regains confidence in that person.

The origin of the domestic cat is considered by some, to be the wild cat of the European forests, but some zoologists still hold that the parent stock is undiscovered. Others think it came to us from Egypt, and afterwards occasionally bred with the native wild cat. This last is the opinion of that high authority Sir William Jardine, who thinks we are indebted to the superstition of the ancient Egyptians for having domesticated the species. "The wild cat is now rarely found in the south of England, and even in Cumberland and Westmoreland its numbers are very much reduced. In the north of Scotland, and in Ireland, it is still abundant." (English Cyclop., Art Felidæ.) As to fossil cats, it is stated that the first traces of large fossil cats have been hitherto found in the second, or verioscene period of the tertiary formations. There are no less than four species of these great cats, some as large as a lion. Fossil remains of a feline animal about the size of a wild cat have also been found. One of the oldest specimens found in this country is part of a lower jaw, from the Cave of Kent's Hole, Torquay, now in the British Museum.

It is pleasant to cat-fanciers to meet their favourites all over the world, north and south, and to find their memorials in the literature of many nations. In Mr. Dasent's Popular Tales from the Norse, there are two stories, entitled, *The Cat on the Doorefell*, and *Lord Peter*: the latter the original from which our well-known *Puss in Boots* is derived. Not a few celebrated men have been fond of cats, though only an instance or two can be given here. It is related of Mohammed that once when his cat was asleep on a part of his dress, he cut the part off when he wanted to get up, rather than disturb

her. Fine old Samuel Johnson used to go out and buy oysters for his pet cat, thinking that the feelings of his servant might be hurt if sent on such an errand. It is difficult to explain, with the doctor's fondness for cats, how it was that he omitted to mention them expressly amongst the inmates of the Happy Valley, and did not enumerate a liking for them as being among the good qualities of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia.

Regarding the attachment of cats to places, the following remarks of the late Rev. Cæsar Otway, in his lecture on the Intellectuality of Domestic Animals, before the Royal Zoological Society of Ireland, some years ago, deserve attention. "Of cats," he says, "time does not allow me to say much, but this I must affirm, that they are misrepresented, and often the victims of prejudice. It is strictly maintained that they have little or no affection for *persons*, and that their partialities are confined to *places*. I have known many instances of the reverse. When leaving, about fifteen years ago, a glebe-house to remove into Dublin, the cat, that was a favourite with me and with my children, was left behind in our hurry; on seeing strange faces come into the house, she instantly left it, and took up her abode in the top of a large cabbage-stalk, whose head had been cut off, but which retained a sufficient number of leaves to protect poor puss from the weather; in this position she remained, and nothing could induce her to leave it, until I sent a special messenger to bring her to my house in town. At present I have a cat that follows my housekeeper up and down like a dog; every morning she comes up at daybreak in winter to the door of the room in which the maid-servants sleep, and there she mews until they get up." It must be remarked here that the way in which some people, when removing, leave their cats behind to shift for themselves, is shameful. It is cruel to throw an animal upon its own resources which has always been accustomed to be provided for.

Those who are interested in anecdotes of the instinct, sagacity, mind, and affections of animals, may be referred, amongst the various books written on this subject, to one lately published by the Rev. F. O. Morris, called *Anecdotes in Natural History*; also, to the same writer's *Records of Animal Sagacity and Character*; with a Preface on the Future Existence of the Animal Creation.

Bewick, in his chapter on cats, says: "Frequent instances are in our recollection, of cats having returned to the place from whence they had been carried, though at many miles' distance, and even across rivers, when they could not possibly have any knowledge of the road or situation that would apparently lead them to it. This extraordinary faculty is, however, possessed in a much greater degree by dogs; yet it is in both animals equally wonderful and unaccountable. In the time of Hoel the Good, King of Wales, who died in the year nine hundred and forty-eight, laws were made as well to preserve as to fix the different prices of

animals; among these the cat was included, as being at that period of great importance, on account of its scarceness and utility. The price of a kitten before it could see, was fixed at one penny; until proof could be given of its having caught a mouse, twopence; after such proof, fourpence: which was a great sum in those days, when the value of specie was extremely high. It was likewise required that it should be perfect in its senses of hearing and seeing, should be a good mouser, should have its claws whole, and, if a female, be a careful nurse. If it failed in any of these qualities, the seller was to forfeit to the buyer the third of its value. If any one should steal or kill the cat that guarded the prince's granary, he was either to forfeit a milch ewe, her fleece and lamb, or as much wheat as, when poured on the cat suspended by its tail (its head touching the floor), would form a heap high enough to cover the tip of the tail. Hence we may conclude that cats were not originally natives of these islands; and from the great care taken to improve and preserve the breed of the prolific creature, we may suppose cats were but little known at that period. Whatever credence we may give to the circumstances of the well-known story of Whittington and his Cat, it is another proof of the great value set upon this animal in former times. Cats have been the means of enriching our own and other languages, with various proverbs. For instance: "To make a cat's-paw" of a person; "To live like cat and dog;" "A cat may look at a king;" "To let the cat out of the bag," might be compared with similar sayings used in France and Italy. In Persia, they have one parallel with the last mentioned: "Gurbah az baghal afgandan," to throw the cat from under the arm—meaning, to discover the secret. Gurbah is Persian for cat, and it may be noticed that Saadi, the celebrated Persian poet, alludes to the cat, in his Gulisthán, or Rose-Garden. To tumble or fall on one's feet like a cat, is also said in Italy. One of the numerous Italian cat proverbs is "Tenere un occhio alla padella, e uno alla gatta"—(Keep one eye on the frying-pan, and the other on the cat), that is, be on your guard against every possible accident. Besides thus contributing to the expressiveness of language, cats can also illustrate a lesson, and rather an important one, in grammar. This odd assertion is explained as follows: "The vowel sounds are usually placed in the order a, e, i, o, u, such being their succession in the various alphabets of Europe and Western Asia; but if we wish to place them in that order which marks their relation to one another, we should unite i, e, a, o, u, or in the opposite order, u, o, a, e, i. It has been shown by experiments, that the different vowel sounds may be produced artificially, by throwing a current of air upon a reed in a pipe, and that, as the pipe is lengthened or shortened, the vowels are successively produced in the order above given. When a door creaks, or a cat mews, we have experiments of the same nature, at least as regards the result, for in both cases we may often detect the due series of the

vowels. Indeed, the word *mew* would be more expressively written *mieaou*. In all these remarks we speak of the vowels as possessing those sounds which are common on the Continent; namely, i like ee, e like ay, a as in father, o as in bone, u as oo, in fool." (English Cyclop., Art. Alphabet.) The reader may try it, and say *mi, e, a, o, u*, according to the right way of pronouncing. A little practice, with the help of a cat, will soon make the student perfect; but let the student not overdo it, for it is related that a nun in a convent was once seized with a sort of monomaniacal fancy for mewing like a cat, and that in a short time the mania took hold of the other nuns, who went mewing about like cats for some time afterwards.

People lose much by not studying animals, and some have strange antipathies to cats. And it may be noticed that cats are apt to revenge themselves by haunting such persons. A lady who used to visit at the writer's house when he was a boy, had a great aversion to cats, and the beautiful cat belonging to the house generally contrived to be in the way when she called. One day we could not account for the poor lady's extreme uneasiness, until we discovered the cat on an elevation near her, looking full in her face. By way of a set off to this, let us record the opposite taste of an Archbishop of Taranto, who kept many cats, gave them fine names, had their dinners prepared according to their individual predilections, kept servants to attend upon them, and finally wrote a book about them. Cats sometimes purr in their sleep, probably dreaming of their friends, or of some pleasant circumstance of their waking hours. Many must have noticed the sparks and crackling noise which sometimes proceed from cats when they are stroked, and there is much electricity in the air. There is even a way of handling a cat by which a slight electric shock may be obtained. Some think that when cats repeatedly rub their paws over their ears, it is a sign of change of weather, and possibly some tickling sensation may be experienced by them from approaching atmospheric changes unappreciable by ourselves. One or two common errors about cats may be noticed. Many persons will destroy them when anything is the matter with them, whereas, in many cases, they would recover with a little care. Some think they do not drink much, which is a mistake. Water should always be placed within their reach. As to their want of attachment, there is no doubt that it is generally owing to the neglect (if not worse treatment) they often experience. Every animal will ordinarily return kindness for kindness, and if persons will only try, they will not find cats an exception. But to knock an animal about, or hardly ever to notice it, and to punish severely any fault it may commit, are not ways to attach it to you. The writer has heard of more than one instance in which, on its master's death, a favourite cat has gone away, and not been seen again. There is a great diversity of character in cats, as indeed in all animals. As to their colours, they are not of such

importance as their shape. They should be well rounded, compactly formed, with small ears, and fur of fine texture. It sometimes happens that ordinary-looking cats have some very good qualities. Cats are very much afraid of each other; two of them will often look at one another over a plate for a long time; neither venturing to move, or to take anything. At other times they are great bullies. One will get close up to another, and scream into his ear, until the other gradually shrinks back, and runs off when he has got clear.

We may learn some useful lessons from cats, as indeed from all animals. Agur, in the book of Proverbs, refers to some, and all through Scripture we find animals used as types of human character. Cats may teach us patience and perseverance, and earnest concentration of mind on a desired object, as they watch for hours together by a mouse-hole, or in ambush for a bird. In their nicely-calculated springs, we are taught neither to come short through want of energy, or go beyond the mark in its excess. In their delicate walking amidst the fragile articles on a table or mantelpiece, is illustrated the tact and discrimination by which we should thread rather than force our way, and, in pursuit of our own ends, avoid the injuring of others. In their noiseless tread and stealthy movements, we are reminded of the frequent importance of secrecy and caution prior to action, while their promptitude at the right moment warns us on the other hand against the evils of irresolution and delay. The curiosity with which they spy into all places, and the thorough smelling which any new object invariably receives from them, commands to us the pursuit of knowledge even "under difficulties." Cats, however, will never smell the same thing twice over, thereby showing a *retentive* as well as an *acquiring* faculty. Then to speak of what may be learned from their mere form and ordinary motions, so full of beauty and gracefulness! What cat was ever awkward or clumsy? Whether in play or in earnest, cats are the very embodiment of elegance. As your cat rubs her head against something you offer her, which she either does not fancy, or does not want, she instructs you that there is a gracious mode of refusing a thing, and as she sits up, like a bear, on her hind legs, to ask for something (which cats will often do for a long time together), you may see the advantage of a winning and engaging way, as well when you are seeking a favour as when you think fit to decline one. If true courtesy and considerateness should prevent you not merely from positively hurting another, but also from purposely clashing—say with another's fancies, peculiarities, or predictions, this too may be learned from the cat, who does not like to be rubbed the wrong way (who *does* like to be rubbed the wrong way?), and who objects to your treading on her tail. Nor is the soft foot, with its skilfully sheathed

and ever sharp claws, without a moral too. For whilst there is nothing commendable in anything approaching to spite, passion, or revenge, a character that is *all* softness is certainly defective. The velvety paw is very well, but it will be the better appreciated when it is known that it carries within it something that is not soft, and which can make itself felt, and sharply felt, on occasion. A cat rolled up into a ball, or crouched with its paws folded underneath it, seems an emblem of repose and contentment. There is something soothing in the mere sight of it. It may remind one of the placid countenance and calm repose with which the Sphinx seems to look forth from the shadow of the Pyramids on the changes and troubles of the world. This leads to the remark that cats, after all, are very enigmatical creatures. You never get to the bottom of cats. You will never find any two, well known to you, that do not offer marked diversities in ways and dispositions; and, in general, the combination they exhibit of activity and repose, and the rapidity with which they pass from the one to the other, their gentle aspect and fragile form united with strength and pliancy, their sudden appearances and disappearances, their tenacity of life, and many escapes from dangers ("as many lives as a cat"), their silent and rapid movements, their sometimes unaccountable gatherings, and strange noises at night—all contribute to invest them with a mysterious fascination, which reaches its culminating point in the (not very frequent) case of a *completely black cat*.

The superstitions that formerly used to connect cats so much with witches, and that too in countries wide apart, attest the prevalence of a feeling that there is something in cats out of the common way.

There is unquestionably more in the minds of all animals than they ordinarily get credit for. Don't you believe, we say to the owner of some favourite dog, cat, or horse, that there was once a time when that bright and expressive eye would have conveyed still more emotion and meaning than it does now? And is not Mr. Ruskin right when he says: "There is in every animal's eye a dim image and gleam of humanity, a flash of strange life through which their life looks at and up to our great mystery of command over them, and claims the fellowship of the creature, if not of the soul?"

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